THE CONSTITUTION,

OR A

FULL ANSWER

TO

MR. EDMUND BURKE'S

ANTI-CONSTITUTIONAL

PLAN OF REFORM.

ADDRESSED

To the Honourable the SPEAKER of the House of Commons.

BY A

LOVER AND STRENUOUS SUPPORTER

OF THE

CONSTITUTION.

Eſt quiddam ſuâ vi nos alliciens, & ad ſeſe trahens ſuâ dignitate: quod genus, VIRTUS, SCIENTIA, VERITAS, eſt.

Cicero *de Inventione.*

LONDON:

SOLD BY W. NICOLL, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M.DCC.LXXXI.

[Price TWO SHILLINGS.]

Advertiſement to the READER.

THE following ſheets contain a ſpeech ſuppoſed to have been ſpoken in the Houſe of Commons on a Re-hearing of Mr. Burke's Plan of Reform.

ERRATA.

P. 17. on a certain day, *read* on a certainty.
24. *as* the outſet, *r.* *at* the outſet.
27. reverſe all of, *r.* reverſe of all.
30. no upper one arrangement, *r.* no one arrangement.
50. in departments, *r.* in *the* departments.
53. in preſent, *r.* in *the* preſent.
54. Emillus, *r.* Emilius.
61. widely, *r.* wildly.
62. cojointly, *r.* conjointly.
64. of even of, *r.* even of.
64. Eſtates, *r.* Eſtate.
67. *as* ſcartely, *r.* ſcarcely.
68. I will explain this matter, *r.* This matter requires no Explanation.
71. preſen, *r.* preſent.
74. pointed by ſatirical, *r.* pointedly ſatirical.
76. full-bloom, *r.* full-blown.
78. fitneſs or fitneſs, *r.* fitneſs or unfitneſs.

ANSWER
TO
Mr. BURKE's SPEECH.

SIR,

THE preſervation of the three great orders of the ſtate, namely, the King, Lords, and Commons, within their ſeveral diſtinct, and proper boundaries, ſo that neither of them ſhall incroach upon the perſons, juriſdictions, or landed property of the other, being one and the ſame thing with the preſervation of the Conſtitution itſelf, I riſe up to reſcue the royal juriſdictions, and landed property of the Crown from thoſe democratic encroachments, and degrading alienations, which they muſt unavoidably undergo, if the honourable gentleman's bill be ſuffered to be carried into a law.

Sir, as the taſk I have now undertaken will involve in its elucidation a retroſpect

into the firſt principles of the Britiſh government, which cannot otherwiſe be aſcertained but by having recourſe to our original treaties or *pacta conventa*, I muſt with the greateſt ſubmiſſion intreat, that the magnitude and importance of the ſubject may for a moment claim the ſerious attention of this illuſtrious aſſembly.

Some months have elapſed ſince the honourable gentleman favoured us with his favorite Philippic, and he hath deemed it ſo finiſhed and maſterly a *chef d' œuvre* in his wide and wild range of oratory and finance, that we find he could not long refrain from launching it out on the wider, but not leſs dangerous, ocean of public print and public criticiſm.

Sir, during the whole four hours which the honourable gentleman employed in thundering forth this fulminating ſpeech, I do no more than juſtice to the enchanting volubility of his tongue, when I confeſs, that the over-ruſhing torrent of his words, and the perpetual flaſhes of his wit, bore down all my judgment whilſt he was whirling me along with him in his fiery career; and if he did not poſſeſs the ſterling, intrinſic talents

talents of making me a laſting convert, he left me at leaſt a momentary admirer of the rapid conception, and leger-de-main deception, of his ideas. What a crowd! what a preſs of beautiful images!—Pity! the whole ſhould be nothing but

"*Paint and pomatum, powder and perfume.*"

Sir, if we ſtrip the honourable gentleman's pamphlet and plan of reform of theſe *papier-maché* ornaments; if we ſpoil it of his carricature portraits "*of the bold baron* "*North and the good knight Probyn*; *of lord* "*Talbot and a turnſpit*; *of the pert factious* "*fellow the duke of Lancaſter and the din-*"*nerleſs duke Humphrey*," with a long train of other ſtories equally facetious, and equally applicable to any other ſubject, and which, on the momentous queſtion now before us, occupy very near forty pages, we rob it at once of that which not enriches ourſelves, but makes his publication poor indeed. It would then remain a perfect ſkeleton, *ſans* life, *ſans* ſoul, *ſans* ſpirit: a mere farrago of propoſitions advanced in one page, and either contradicted or defeated by himſelf in the very next: a wanton, unſkilful amputation of the vital and nobler members of the crown, un-

thought-of by the petitioning counties, unaſked in their petitions: in ſhort, a ſyſtem of finance, which he hiſſelf believes will bring no conſiderable ſum of money into the exchequer [1]; and a departure from the conſtitution, which muſt ultimately ſuperinduce a much greater evil, than that intended to be removed.

Sir, that I have not ſaid, without ſufficient foundation, that the honourable gentleman frequently contradicts himſelf, give me leave to lay before this houſe a few of the many glaring inſtances of this kind, which occur in almoſt every page.

In page the firſt, on the very outſet of his ſpeech, he gives us to underſtand, that he grounds his Bill on *the unanimous wiſh of the whole nation for a plan of reform.* However in page eleven, he finds himſelf obliged to qualify the expreſſion a little; he accordingly does allow, that the miniſters, and conſequently all their numerous body-guard of adherents, are not included in this unanimous wiſh of the whole nation; and perhaps it may not be thought an overſtraining of

[1] Page 34.

the

the queſtion to aſk him, whether by the nine petitioning counties, together with the city of Weſtminſter, who do not make a ſixth part of the nation, he means that the whole kingdom of Scotland, the whole principality of Wales, and all the non-petitioning and non-delegating counties in England, by their total ſilence, can fairly be preſumed to have ſubſcribed to, or done any other act in conformity to this *ſame unanimous wiſh of the whole nation?* But, Sir, not to quarrel about trifles, let us ſuppoſe for a moment, that this ſame wiſh of the whole nation is unanimous: ought it not then to have operated as a powerful reaſon, and an inducement ſufficient of itſelf, without any other conſiderations, to have prevailed on this faithful repreſentative of the people to follow the ſenſe of his conſtituents? No, Sir, no ſuch thing. His favourite maxim, which upon every occaſion he takes care publickly to avow, is, that the *repreſented*, however they may be in poſſeſſion of the clear, undoubted right to inſtruct their repreſentatives, yet they have no right whatever to expect that the *repreſentative* body are to ſquare their votes in parliament conformant to the inſtructions of their conſtituents. Agreeable to this glorious principle of diſobedience to

our

our ſuperiors, or employers at leaſt, he in page 15, with an eaſy *ſang froid*, unboſoms himſelf to his conſtituents, and ſays, " I cannot indeed take upon me to " ſay, that I have the honour to *follow* " the ſenſe of the people : the real truth of " the matter is, and I candidly own it, *I* " *met the ſenſe of the people on the way while* " *I was purſuing their intereſt according to* " *my* OWN *ideas*." Not, Sir, according to the unanimous wiſh of the whole nation, not according to the ſpecial prayer of the petitioning counties, but (very modeſtly indeed) according to his OWN ideas.

Such, Sir, is the rock I have to ſoften; ſuch the knotted oak I have to bend ; ſuch the contradictions I have to ſteer between ; and ſuch the Goliah, the gigantic Wit I have to encounter. But wit, Sir, is one thing, and wiſdom is another. And though I allow my antagoniſt ſpeaks with the tongue of angels, though I allow he poſſeſſes all *knowledge*, and that he hath acquired a moſt enlarged *underſtanding* ; yet lacking *wiſdom*, as he apparently doth, all his other acquirements become as ſounding *braſs*, and a tinkling cymbal.

By *knowledge*, I mean that perception of things which comes to us through the medium of ſome one or more of our five ſenſes; it is *matter per ſe*, matter in its ultimate ſtage of diviſibility, bordering *upon*, yet without any intermixture *of*, *ſpirit*: the brute creation have it in common with men: its proper ſeat is in the organs of our ſenſes.

Underſtanding is not confined to ſuperficialities as our ſenſes are; it is partly *material*, and partly *ſpiritual*; it gives us to know not only the external forms of things, but alſo their internal, occult properties and qualities; and they are ſaid to be occult, becauſe they are hidden from the perception of our ſenſes; the ſeat of this faculty of the *ſoul* is paramount to the mere organs of our ſenſes; it is much more than ſkin-deep; it lies in the inmoſt receſſes of the *heart*. It is that *liberum arbitrium* which raiſes us one ſtep above the brute-creation; all men (lunatics and ideots excepted) have it in common, and the only difference is in a leſs or greater degree.

Wiſdom is the divine *primum-mobile* of the mind; it is *pure ſpirit* diveſted of all matter. It is Light of Light [2]. It is not acquirable

[2] John c. i. 5. ὁ Θεὸς ΦΩΣ ἐστι.

as

as knowledge and underſtanding are by human means; it is the peculiar gift of God; its ſpecial province is not merely to *know* and *underſtand* men and things, but alſo to direct, and well-govern the thoughts, words, and actions of ourſelves and of others in all our various ſtations and ſituations of life. It is the immediate link that connects the human ſoul with its Creator. Its proper ſeat is in the *brain* of man.

But, Sir, as there is an immenſity of diſtance between Underſtanding and Wiſdom, ſo it not unfrequently happens that they, who cannot arrive at the latter, ſtop ſhort either at cunning or wit. Cunning is an undermining, mole-eyed animal, averſe to day-light. Wit is a vivid ſun-beam reflected from a watery ſurface on the wall, on the cieling, or any other opaque body, full of brightneſs, without ſubſtance, without ſtability. Yet, tranſitorily pleaſing as this dazzling brilliancy may be to the eye, it ſerves but to ſhew how unequal the momentary flaſhes of wit are to the true ſteady light of wiſdom. A wit may be inimitable indeed at a *bon mot*, or an epigram, but he will never ſpeak a finiſhed oration, or write a maſterly, ſerious epic poem. The one

will

will be little better than a tranſcript of Joe Miller's Jeſts; the other, a fac-ſimile of Virgil Traveſtie.

Though I thus pay all fitting adoration to the rare gift of Wiſdom, yet I promiſe my antagoniſt, I have no wiſh or deſign to leſſen his reputation as a Wit: I ſhall leave him in full poſſeſſion of his lively ſtrokes of humour, and all the burniſhed gildings of his Arabian Knights Tales. My buſineſs ſhall be to expoſe and detect only ſuch parts of his reform as are repugnant to, or incompatible with the conſtitution.

In proof that I mean nothing but fair, political candour, I will allow, as he does, "That the taſk he hath undertaken is of an "unthankful, invidious nature." I will allow with him, "That he riſques much "odium ſhould he ſucceed, and ſtill much "more contempt, if poſſible, ſhould he fail." I alſo agree with him, nay, I will uſe his own words, and acknowledge, "That *ſome-*"*thing of the kind ſhould be done.*" I farther agree with him, "That this *ſame* "*ſomething of the kind* ſhould not be (as he "ſtill more elegantly phraſes it) [3] *an accu-*

[3] See pages 18 & 48.

" *mulated patch-work of occaſional accommo-*
" *dation*;" but, on the contrary, a ſubſtantial permanent reform, going to the very origin and firſt-ruling cauſe of the grievances complained-of in the ten petitions now before us. Having made theſe conceſſions, all that remains then in controverſy between us, is ſimply, whether the bill he hath now brought-in will anſwer the ends he propoſes by it.

The honourable gentleman's pamphlet (as a preliminary to the bill) contains the ſum total of every argument he thought proper to adduce in favour of that ſide the queſtion he hath eſpouſed. In order, therefore, to fiſh out the truth, as it were, by regular approaches, I will conſider his plan under three diſtinct heads; ſhewing, in the firſt place, what *hath been done* in purſuance of theſe petitions, what is *ſtill doing*, and what could *not be done* without a violation to the conſtitution. *Secondly*, that the influence of the crown, ſo far as it may be ſuppoſed to furniſh matter of complaint, doth not originate in the number of court-dependants now, or at any former time, in parliament; but that its origin and firſt-ruling cauſe is the national debt. *Thirdly*, that the plan will not tend to diminiſh the influence complained of,

and

and that the ſale of the foreſt and other crown lands, as an article of finance, can anſwer no one important purpoſe of the ſtate.

With reſpect then to my firſt diviſion, I am to obſerve, that the petitions before us are only ten in number [4]; nine of them are petitions coming from nine ſeveral counties, the remaining petition is that of the city of Weſtminſter. In this ſmall catalogue of petitions, which the honourable reformer in the very firſt page of his pamphlet hath the true bronze forehead to ſay, that it conveys to this houſe *the unanimous wiſhes of the whole nation*; methinks it is rather a little unfortunate for him, that we cannot find in it the the petition of the metropolitan city of the whole Britiſh empire. The city of London, which is the head of the whole Britiſh empire, and which in the point of taxes contributes as much as all the nine counties together, doth not appear to us, nor in any one of the petitions before us, to have harboured any one wiſh about the matter. I thought it neceſſary juſt to ſpeak a word *en paſſant* of this ſilence of the city of London, to ſhew what little dependence or confidence

4 1 York. 2 Middleſex. 3 Hertford. 4 Suſſex. 5 Surrey. 6 Bedford. 7 Eſſex. 8 Somerſet. 9 Wilts. 10 Weſtminſter.

can ſafely be placed in any perſon whatever, who in the very outſet of his ſpeech and pamphlet ſhall have the *forehead* and front to advance an aſſertion which every child in the kingdom muſt know to be untrue.

Return we then to thoſe ten petitions before us, and taking that of the county of York as a ring-leader, if not an exact counterpart of the other nine, let us ſee what is their prayer. It is expreſſed in the following words:

"That before any new burthens are laid "upon this country, effectual meaſures may be taken by this houſe to "enquire into, and correct the groſs "abuſes in the expenditure of public "money; to reduce all exorbitant "emoluments; to reſcind and aboliſh "all ſine-cure places, and unmerited "penſions; and to appropriate the pro"duce to the neceſſities of the ſtate, "in ſuch manner as to the wiſdom of "parliament ſhall ſeem meet."

Sir, though the right to petition in all matters of grievance, whether public or private, be one of the deareſt privileges a free people can enjoy, a right which is declared, renewed,

newed, and ſecured to us in the Bill of Rights; and though the principle of the prayer of the ſeveral petitions now before us, *ſo far* as it is conformant to the conſtitution of this realm, deſerves every poſſible attention and reſpect, yet, with regard to the petitions themſelves, it muſt be obvious to every one here preſent, that this houſe is not competent, nay, it is highly indecent in us, and that too in more ſenſes than one, to aſſume and arrogate to ourſelves the ſupreme and immediate authority of having prayers and ſupplications offered up to us. Pray, Sir, to whom and from whom do theſe prayers and ſupplications come? I will read to you the formula or ſuperſcription of them.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament aſſembled:
The PETITION of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of the County of York.

This turning of the eſtabliſhed ranks and orders of men topſy-turvy is it fitting, is it decent? I have ſeen (ſaith Solomon the preacher) ſervants riding on horſes, he might have ſaid aſſes too for thus degrading themſelves, and their maſters walking as ſervants; and to give us his opinion of ſo prepoſterous and inſufferable an inſolence, one

of

of the three things, for which the very earth is diſquieted, he ſaith, is, when a ſervant reigneth over his maſter. This wiſe ſaying we at this inſtant verify. We are the ſervants of our conſtituents, they aſſign every one of us our certain fees and wages, namely, to every knight of the ſhire four ſhillings, and to every citizen and burgeſs two ſhillings *per diem*: they likewiſe pay us our travelling expences from our own houſes to this houſe, and back again from this houſe to our own. The laſt of the very numerous ſtatutes made on our behalf in this reſpect was in the year 1543; its title is, "The Bill "for Knights and Burgeſſes in Wales, con- "cerning the Payment of their Fees "and Wages." As ſervants to our conſtituents, receiving wages of our conſtituents, we ought with every mark of decency and reſpect to have ſent the ſeveral petitions to their reſpective counties, by their reſpective repreſentatives, with this information (if information could be wanting in a matter ſo obvious and clear) that this Houſe is not competent to receive public documents of that nature from their conſtituents under the ſtyle of petitions; but if they would be pleaſed to return thoſe very documents under the name of *inſtructions*, we ſhould then moſt aſſuredly

pay

pay all due deference and immediate attention to them: otherwiſe we could neither preſume nor dare to intermeddle, becauſe the conſtitution [5] had expreſsly aſſigned and confined all petitions of that ſort reſpectively and ſolely to the head or ſupreme branch of the legiſlature: and that in *political* men it would be highly criminal to treſpaſs upon the eſtabliſhed forms of government; becauſe it is well known to ſtateſmen, that the definition of any thing is only the form of the thing defined, and that the corruption of one form of government unavoidably ſuperinduces the generation of another.

Having thus ſhewn that the petitions, *quâ tales*, ought not to have been admitted under this roof at all; it ſhould ſeem almoſt a work of ſupererogation to ſhew what hath been done in obedience, or in purſuance at leaſt, to thoſe petitions ſo unconſtitutionally admitted within theſe walls. Beſides, it ſhould ſeem a pleonaſm, or work of redundancy, from the very recency of the thing itſelf. For there is not one perſon in the whole kingdom, the leaſt acquainted with public affairs, but muſt know, that government, as ſoon as the ordi-

[5] See King John's Magna Charta, art. 49.

nary

nary rules of this houſe would well allow it, did actually appoint a public commiſſion of accounts. It is likewiſe ſufficiently known that theſe commiſſioners have not only begun upon this arduous taſk, but alſo that they have from time to time regularly reported the progreſs they have made, the ſums of money they have found unaccounted-for, the large ſums of money already paid into the exchequer, and the balance that ſtill remains to be paid. The ſeveral ſums already amount to 1,000,000 l. But it may probably be ſaid, that the prayer of the petitioners does not extend ſo much to an enquiry into the quantum and magnitude of the ſeveral ſums of money which lay dormant, or unaccounted-for, in the hands of the various receivers of it, as it does to the groſs abuſes alledged to have been made in the expenditure of public money. Granted. Yet ſurely the firſt ſtep to be taken was to make a *productive* enquiry, an enquiry into ſuch of the outſtanding debts due to the public, as might immediately, or in a very ſhort time, be paid into the exchequer. This great and good work, Sir, I have obſerved, hath far advanced on its way, and is ſtill progreſſively and productively moving on, with ſuch judiciouſneſs, impartiality, regularity, and diſpatch, as to have given a general ſatisfaction.

tisfaction. We hear no murmurings nor high words without doors; no diſtreſſing of public debtors with vexatious, expenſive law-ſuits; no harraſſing of their ſureties with premature, and perhaps unneceſſary extents. All is juſtice tempered with moderation on the part of the commiſſioners; all is obedience, ſtamped with the ſeal of alacrity on the part of the ſeveral accountants, who either have actually brought their reſpective balances into the exchequer, or requeſt a reaſonable reſpite, or ſatisfactorily aſcertain their utter inability to pay.

In the midſt of this willingneſs on one ſide to accommodate, and this readineſs on the other to obey, if it be again demanded, why the groſs abuſes in the expenditure of the public money is not brought on the carpet, I anſwer again, that in all wiſe adminiſtrations, thoſe enquiries are firſt to take place, which on a certain day will produce an immediate influx of ready money into the fiſcal coffers.

Contraſt the quick operations and immediate effect of this commiſſion of accounts, a commiſſion ſuggeſted and matured by adminiſtration; a commiſſion which is daily

and hourly pouring freſh tides of real ſpecie into the national treaſury from every county, without diſtreſſing any one HONEST man throughout the whole kingdom, and without making any innovation in the conſtitution, or even the leaſt alteration in the eſtabliſhed forms and ſettled rules of any one of the great or ſubordinate departments of the ſtate: contraſt, I ſay, the good and ſalutary effects immediately reſulting from this commiſſion of accounts, with the ſluggiſh movements, and torpid, uncertain effects, we are taught to expect from the honourable gentleman's plan of reform. A reform, which crude and puerile as it is in theory, yet not one *iota* of it can be carried into practice, without introducing innovation upon innovation, and turning the very foundations of the conſtitution upſide down; and what is ſtill worſe, if poſſible, the petitioners are to look for very little if any relief, from this wanton diſturbation and perturbation of the ancient and eſtabliſhed forms of government. And after all this chaos of diſorder, will HIS pretended reform create ſuch a national ſaving as to ſupply the place of any one freſh tax, were it ever ſo ſmall? No, Sir, that hope, that point, is already given up. For the honourable gentleman does not, in the leaſt, ſcruple to tell us, page

14,

14, " that a *great* part of his idea of reform " (id eſt, Form of Reform) is meant to ope- " rate gradually; ſome benefits, he ſays, will " accrue at a *nearer*, ſome at a more *remote* " period." But mark the cunning little Iſaac, he does not ſay, *at* a *leſs near*, but in defiance of all correct writing, *at a more remote* period. The fact is, that not any one benefit whatever is likely to accrue *immediately:* ſo far from it, that his firſt claſs of benefits, which according to his Iriſh account of their *remoteneſs*, are *nearer* than his ſecond claſs, even theſe are not to be expected by his petitioners, but at a period *poſitively* remote; otherwiſe, when ſpeaking of his ſecond claſs of benefits, he could not have ſaid, this claſs will arrive at a period ſtill *more remote.*

That this is the honourable gentleman's true meaning, if really he had any meaning at all, may be gathered from the day-light he afterwards, in pages 60, 61, 62, throws upon this crepuſcular, ſublucent paſſage:

Qualia ſublucent fugiente crepuſcula Phœbo.
Aut ubi nox abiit, nec tamen orta Dies.

In this part of his pamphlet, alluding to the great patent offices of the exchequer, and finding all on a ſudden, "that they are *held* (an accurate ſpeaker would have ſaid, "*holden*") for life, he hath theſe expreſs words, I *fear* this reform cannot be *immediate*. Here indeed we have the firſt dawning of the truth —this reform is not to be *immediate*. But is this the whole truth? very far from it. It is only a negative pregnant. And the honourable gentleman, who in this paragraph, *fears* his reform will not *be immediate*, in the very next paragraph, feels himſelf quite bold, and frankly owns, that ſo far from this reform being immediate, it cannot take effect until two generations ſhall have paſſed away. For, in page 62, he ſays, "my idea is to "reduce theſe patent offices to fixed ſalaries, "as the lives and reverſions ſhall fall." Now, Sir, as the honourable gentleman very well knows, that all theſe offices are granted two or three lives deep, he muſt of conſequence know, that the reduction he now talks of, is not likely to take place during the preſent reign, and very poſſibly, not in the next immediately enſuing, ſo that the petitioners cannot reaſonably expect one ſtiver benefit from it for half a century to come. Are theſe ſugary, fly-catching, honied words,

one

one jot better than holding forth falſe colours to his conſtituents? is it not trifling with them? or what is it but playing on the Iriſh harp with their petitions? they cry and roar for imminent daily bread—he gives them a ſtone—their fervent prayer is for inſtant, ſubſtantial food—he gives them moonſhine and atmoſpheric air. And upon what terms does he condeſcend to grant them this flatulent, ill-digeſting boon? why truly, they are to be tantalized with a warm Claude-Lorrain landſkip-view of this promiſed land of Canaan, but the actual poſſeſſion of it is to be with-holden from them for two lives certain, and very probably till—doomſday.—

How different, how happily diſſimilar in point of effect are the two plans of reform; the one propoſed by the honourable gentleman, the other by adminiſtration. Parliament gave them both a candid hearing; parliament rejected the former, and adopted the latter; nor can there longer remain a doubt which of the two is impartially and bonâ fide the better, when an honourable member now in my eye, perſonally, and politically attached, as he is, to the author of the rejected plan of reform, hath given a decided

cided preference in favor of that of the noble lord in the blue ribbon.

Having thus curſorily ſhewn, what hath been done, we will in due order ſhew what is farther to be done in purſuance of this treaſury-plan of reform.

Sir, the noble lord at the head of the treaſury hath already propoſed three different bills, one of which is to prolong the commiſſion of accounts for another year, with all the powers before granted; the other two bills are of great importance in the buſineſs of finance. By the firſt, the receivers-general of the land will, for the future, be obliged to remit their money within forty days after it ſhall have been collected by them. By this eaſy, ſimple improvement, the public money will come into the exchequer ſoon after it is received, and will no longer be expoſed to thoſe riſques and loſſes which too often have happened, by ſuffering the whole, or part of the ſeveral collections, to be detained year after year in the hands of the reſpective receivers-general.

The *ſecond* bill goes to an object of much greater extent; it applies upwards of 400,000 l.

400,000l. ſterling to the *public* ſervice, by taking it out of the hands of the treaſurers and paymaſters, where it now is permitted to lie, for no other purpoſe but that of anſwering eventual demands. This reform, Sir, goes to the very pith and marrow of that branch of the petitioners prayer, which moſt earneſtly requeſts that effectual meaſures may be taken by this Houſe to reduce all exorbitant emoluments, and at the ſame time, that it does in reality reduce emoluments of office, to the amount of 400,000l. and upwards, it appropriates that ſum to the neceſſities of the ſtate.

Let us again put the two plans of reform into the ſcales, that we may better judge the intrinſic weight of the one and the other.

The treaſury plan, before this bill is preſumed to have any right to take up the valuable moments of this Houſe, points out to us an object, which in a month or two will produce a certain ſum of money; that money is not to be hunted for North and South, or South and North of Trent; a fruitleſs, or at beſt, a tireſome journey: no, Sir, we have it already in hand, and we need travel no farther for it than to our own treaſurers, and the

the perſons who are to pay it, are our own paymaſters. We know the preciſe or nearly the preciſe amount, we know for a certainty that the ſum is four hundred thouſand pounds and upwards.

Put we now the honourable gentleman's plan of reform in the oppoſite ſcale. What does he bring to counterbalance our predilection for his antagoniſt? Why, Sir, page 34, he will put up to public auction all the foreſt-lands, and foreſt rights, and apply the produce of them, as he ſays page 94, to the public ſervice. But does he aſcertain the ſpecific ſum, or nearly the ſpecific ſum, this enormous glut of foreſt-lands, &c. will ſell for? No, Sir, our orator on this head is ſilent as the grave—all is vague, indefinite, and uncertain, except indeed, that he tells us, page 32, by way of an agreeable viaticum or morning's whet, before we ſet forward on this wild-gooſe chaſe South and North of Trent, that the revenue to be obtained from theſe ſales will not be ſo conſiderable as many have imagined. This, Sir, is a poor encouragement, and exhibits ſomewhat of an unpleaſant proſpect, at the outſet of a political journey.

Does

Does he give us other aſſurances, or feed us with better hopes of ſucceſs in the ſale of the other landed property of the crown? here again, we are unkindly left in the dark as to the ſpecific, or nearly ſpecific ſum, the ſale of them will produce. All that we know of the matter is, "that theſe landed eſtates "of the crown, whatever they may poſſibly "have been in other times, he aſſures us, "page 32, they are not at preſent of magni-"tude enough to *provide for any one public* "*object.*" Ergo, to apply the produce of them to the ſervice of the public, muſt doubtleſs appear a very cogent reaſon for putting them up to ſale.

Beſides, Sir, the lords commiſſioners of that board have diſcovered a new road to make this banking buſineſs (as that noble gentleman calls it) not only very uſeful, but I might add, abſolutely neceſſary offices. For the treaſury board are now going to draw upon theſe two offices for 400,000 l. and upwards, and are certain, that the whole ſum will be paid into the Exchequer immediately, without a moment's delay.

The concluſion then to be drawn from the premiſes is ſimply this, if one plan of reform

offers to raiſe you an immediate ſpecific, very conſiderable ſum of money, and that already in the hands of government; and if the other plan of reform propoſes to raiſe you at a far diſtant time an uncertain, unſpecified, inconſiderable ſum, and that too, probably not without litigious and expenſive law-ſuits, it cannot well remain a doubt, which of the two deſerves the preference, as an article of finance.

If we take a farther comparative view of the two plans, with reſpect to the offices of the treaſurer of the navy, and that of the paymaſter-general of the army, the ſcale will ſtill preponderate as it did before.

The honourable gentleman, in his plan, page 55, propoſes "that all the money "which was formerly impreſted to the two "great *pay offices* abovementioned, ſhall be "impreſted in future to the *Bank of England*: "that theſe offices ſhall, in future, receive "no more than caſh ſufficient for *ſmall* pay-"ments, and that their other payments ſhall "be made by draughts on the Bank." Before he ventures indeed to introduce ſo daring and perplexed a ſcene of innovation, he endeavours to ſoften it by ſaying, page 53, "the

" the crown will ſuffer no wrong by thus " transferring the banking buſineſs of theſe " two offices to the Bank of England."

This, Sir, I apprehend is a mere gratis-dictum, unſupported by concluſive, unexceptionable arguments, and contradictable by a poſſible event. I do not ſay, " a *probable* " *event.*" It is, however, the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of every wiſe adminiſtration, to provide againſt, and prevent every poſſible diſaſterous contingency, more eſpecially ſo, if the contingency ſhould, in its own nature, be of ſuch a magnitude, as to put an inſtantaneous ſtop to all the wheels of government, both at home and abroad.

Sir, if you transfer the banking buſineſs of the treaſuryſhip of the navy, and of the paymaſter-generalſhip of the army to the Bank of England; I ſay, ſuch a caſe as that above alluded-to is poſſible, I mean a ſtoppage of payment at the Bank itſelf. We ſaw the Bank nearly reduced to that criſis in the year 1745. We ſaw it again not unlikely to have been effected but a few months ago, by the intrigues (as it is ſuppoſed) of the French court. Certain it is, that a perſon well known, was underhandedly countenanced, in the town of

Bouillon, a town under the protection of France, to counterfeit an impreſſion of Engliſh bank-notes, to a conſiderable amount, for the ſpecial purpoſe, as it ſhould ſeem, of deluging, or at leaſt ſtopping, for a moment, the credit of our bank-paper. It is true, by the vigilance of government, and the unalarmed, unbuſtling activity of the Bank-directors, this ſtorm was diſperſed before it could acquire ſtrength and force enough to give any important ſhock. But had this thunder-ſtroke ſucceeded, as it was evidently intended it ſhould, what muſt have been the conſequence to the whole Britiſh empire, if government, in ſuch a moment of confuſion and calamity, had, at that time, no other treaſury, or bank to fly to? Is not then an event ſo poſſible as this, a ſufficient cauſe for reprobating any plan of reform, which can ſeriouſly propoſe ſo ruinous and impolitic a meaſure, as that of conſolidating and uniting the national and governmental caſh, under one bank, and one paymaſter-general. But, beſides this dreadful inconvenience, ſuch a meaſure would, neceſſarily, ſuperinduce another, and ſtill more to be more dreaded if poſſible than the former. For in every country, be the government deſpotic, ariſtocratic, mixt, or democratic, the fiſcal treaſure, whether

ther it be lodged in one place or another, muſt always be protected by a military guard. And how the nation at large, or the merchants of this metropolis in particular, would reliſh ſuch a ſight, or how they could ſafely truſt the Bank of England to any body of men, who, in one moment's time, and by one ſingle word of command, could make themſelves maſter of it any hour of the night or day, we may eaſily conceive from the din and clamour, in this houſe, made, even by the honourable gentleman himſelf, on a late ſimilar fact; a fact, Sir, which nothing could have juſtified, but the incipient conflagration which then threatened, not only the Bank, but the whole cities of London and Weſtminſter.

See now the reverſe of all this miſrule and uproar in the treaſury plan of reform, which only by leaving the tide of buſineſs to flow in its old ſettled channels, and not breaking-in upon the eſtabliſhed rules of office, enables government to draw upon the treaſurer of the navy, and upon the pay-maſter-general of the army, for arrears actually in their hands, to the full and net amount of 400,000 l. and in caſe of a ſudden ſtop in the national bank (which heaven avert) his majeſty, in the hour of tumult

tumult in the city, would ſtill have his naval bank, his military bank, and his civil-eſtabliſhment bank, to reſort-to; and thus while no upper ~~one~~ arrangement was put out of order in ^the departments of the ſtate, we ſhould have the happineſs to ſee our beloved ſovereign, with all his wonted calmneſs of temper, ſerenity of countenance, and compoſure of mind, as one of our poets ſays,

Sit in the whirlwind, and DIRECT *the ſtorm.*

Sir, the treaſury-plan of reform, conſidering the petitions now before us in no other light than that of inſtructions to this houſe, embraces the earlieſt opportunity, conſiſtent with the due courſe and order of the great political machine, to gratify and fulfill the wiſhes of the people in every reſpect as far as the conſtitution will allow. The noble lord who preſides at the treaſury hath, as you ſee, propoſed two bills, their principal object, you likewiſe ſee, is a reduction of the exorbitant emoluments of office. That important end will, I apprehend, be attained by theſe bills, and in addition to it, behold another effect naturally reſulting and ſpringing out of them, which was not before in the contemplation of the petitioners. The reduction now propoſed anſwers two purpoſes inſtead of one; for

for at the ſame time that it obeys the inſtructions of our conſtituents, it actually becomes an article of finance to the ſtate.

Artful and maſterly as this manœuvre is, yet it may probably be ſaid, that it rather creates a ſaving out of the public money *not expended*, than that it goes to correct the groſs abuſes in the *expenditure* of the public money. Granted that it does—the treaſury-plan of reform, you may be well aſſured, was aware of this diſtinction, and therefore does not ſtop at this ſtage, as at the final end of its journey; but only as a breathing-place for a few minutes, until a third bill, which is to come on at a ſhort future day, can in its proper order of ſucceſſion make its public entry into this houſe.

By this bill the groſs abuſes will be corrected conformant to the moſt ſanguine deſires of the people. The noble planner of it, with his uſual accuracy and preciſion in pointing-out the courſe of, as well as the remedy *for* this abuſe, obſerved to us, that in every one of the different eſtabliſhments now in America there is an avowed, acknowledged HEAD, and if any abuſe in the expenditure of the public money hath been committed,

committed, the perſon at the head of the eſtabliſhment is reſponſible for every ſuch abuſe as hath happened in his particular department. The noble lord farther told us, that his intention was not to lay the blame on any officer either in the military or civil line; he was willing to proceed agreeable to that wiſe maxim, which went to conclude every man innocent, until he ſhould be found guilty; but, no doubt, there were grounds to preſume guilt, ſome where or other, from the extraordinaries of the army having riſen to ſo enormous an amount. This ſore, he thought, was beyond his abilities ſingly to cure; it ought to be probed to the bottom, and therefore declares that he ſhould move in this third bill, "that it be a particular in-"ſtruction to the commiſſioners to proceed "immediately into an examination of the "army extraordinaries, at leaſt ſuch of them "as were incurred on account of the Ame-"rican war."

Theſe, Sir, are the great out-lines of this third intended bill; our conſtituents in their inſtructions could not well have framed one more conformant to this branch of their requeſt, nor more certain of producing the deſired effect. The treaſury-plan of reform, with

with reſpect to the moſt important and arduous undertaking to correct the groſs abuſes in the expenditure of public money, the treaſury plan, I ſay, ſtands ſingle, without rival, without competitor: the flowery, the brilliant Hibernian orator, in his plan of reform, muſt ſure have thought the accompliſhment of ſo intricate and weighty a buſineſs either impoſſible or impracticable, or not worthy his notice, or his abilities unequal to it: for certain it is, he hath not favoured us with one metaphor, one *bouquet*, one beautiful image; no, nor one ſingle word on this moſt eſſential part of his conſtituents inſtructions. This omiſſion, or neglect, not to call it by its proper name "diſobedience," might not have been expected from a perſon who, page 15, acknowledges, "That he is under infinite obligations to his conſtituents who have "raiſed him to ſo diſtinguiſhed a truſt, and "have imparted ſuch a degree of ſanctity to "a common character." Any the leaſt ſhadow of diſobedience in a perſon ſo circumſtanced muſt have appeared very unaccountable, had not the honourable gentleman, in the very ſame paragraph, accounted for it his-ſelf in the following very candid, but not very polite declaration: "In my opi-

"nion, it is our duty, when we have "the deſires of the people before us, to "purſue them, *not in the ſpirit of literal* "*obedience*, which may militate with their "very principle." So that we are now to conclude, that when the people deſire to have the groſs abuſes in the expenditure of the public money corrected, we are not to correct them at all; becauſe ſuch correction would militate againſt the principle of their deſires, which are, that they ſhould be corrected—*Ecce Homo* !—This is one of thy gods, Oh Iſrael !

I have thus ſhewn, Sir, what hath been done, and what is now doing by government, in obedience to the wiſhes and inſtructions of ſo reſpectable a part of the people as form a majority of nine counties and the city of Weſtminſter : it remains to be ſhewn, what farther cannot be done.

The only remaining wiſh of the people is, that this houſe will take effectual meaſures to reſcind and aboliſh all ſine-cure places, and unmerited penſions.

Sir, if at any time ſuch a requiſition could be made to us by our conſtituents with the leaſt

leaſt ſhadow of propriety, and common decency, certainly it ſhould be at ſuch periods when our royal ſovereign applies to this houſe, either for an increaſe of his civil liſt eſtabliſhment, or for a perſonal money-grant upon any other occaſion. But the truth is, this houſe is not competent to take the leaſt cognizance of this branch of their inſtructions. The commons in parliament have no controul over the money after it is granted to the king: it is no longer theirs: they have nothing to do with it; it is ſolely at the king's will, pleaſure, and diſpoſal. Is there not a threefold diviſion of the legiſlative power well underſtood and agreed to by the three branches of the legiſlature? The commons are excluſively in poſſeſſion of all money-grants *in*, but not *out* of parliament: the ultimate court of judicature, over the whole landed property in the kingdom, is excluſively appropriated to the lords. Laſtly, the *executive* power to GOVERN, is excluſively veſted in the king.

Under this tripartite, well-divided, and well-underſtood, arrangement, I apprehend, it would not be a greater inſult to this houſe, if the king was to come within theſe walls and ſay, "I have an abſolute, controlling

power over the property of the people, and you muſt this ſeſſion add 290,000 l. a year to my civil liſt eſtabliſhment," than it would be, if when we next approach the king upon his throne, we ſhould ſay to him, " Sire, we have an abſolute, controlling power over the money we gave your majeſty, we muſt, and do inſiſt, that you diſpoſe of it only to ſuch perſons, and in ſuch manner, as we ſhall approve." This, Sir, is a fair ſtatement of the caſe. What would be the conſequence? Why, the commons within, and without doors, would be all on fire at ſo glaring a breach of their privilege, and the king would conſider ſo groſs, and indignant an inſult upon his prerogative, in no other light, than an indirect attack upon his crown. *Eadem ratio, idem judicium.*

Sir, it is for theſe reaſons, amongſt others, ſtill more cogent, which I ſhall enforce in their * proper place; that I am clearly of opinion, the county papers now before us, ſo far as they enjoin a reciſion and abolition of *all* ſine-cures, and unmerited penſions, do not come under the cognizance of this houſe. We have no right or power, conſiſtent with

* See p.

the

the arrangement above-mentioned, to interfere or intermeddle with them. This is ſo clear a point, that the honourable reformer his-ſelf, who hath voluntarily undertaken the defence of theſe county-documents, florid and fluent as he is of words, hath not one *iota* to ſay in their behalf. Nay, Sir, he does not barely content himſelf with a ſimple deſertion or dereliction of his client's cauſe on this head, he veers about on a-ſudden, ſhifts ſides, and to give them a ſample of his amazing powers of oratory, and at the ſame time to convince them, that much may be ſaid on both ſides the queſtion, in pages 57, 58, he delivers his ſentiments in the following words, "I do not propoſe to take away any pen-"ſion. A critical, retroſpective examination "of the penſion-liſt, upon the principle of "merit, cannot anſwer, *according to my plan*, "any effectual purpoſe of œconomy, or of "future permanent reformation. The pro-"ceſs, in any way, will be entangled and "difficult, and it will be infinitely ſlow. "Beſides, the king has been, by the conſti-"tution, appointed *ſole judge* of the merit "for which a penſion is to be given."

Having thus fully ſtated what hath been done by government, as well as what the honourable

honourable reformer his-ſelf is conſtrained to own, cannot be done conſiſtently with the conſtitution; it is now in courſe for us to ſhew, that the influence of the crown, ſo far as it may be ſuppoſed to furniſh matter for complaint, doth not originate in the number of court-dependants now, or at any former time, in parliament, but that its origin, and firſt ruling cauſe, is ſolely imputable to the national debt.

Sir, there is nothing more common for phyſicians, who even paſs for men of eminence in their profeſſion, than to miſtake a ſecondary ſymptom for a primary one, and, not unfrequently, one diſeaſe for another. The misfortune is, that whilſt they are under the guidance of ſuch falſe impreſſions, they apply wrong medicines, and the patient, after loſing what little vivid blood he had remaining in his veins, inſtead of being cured, finds his conſtitution a thouſand times more ſhattered than it was before. The fallibility of the phyſician is, however, in ſome degree excuſable, becauſe in the therapeutic ſcience, there is no abſolute, certain, unerring criterion for the gentlemen of the faculty to judge by. But this apology for profeſſional ignorance, a very bad one indeed, yet the very

very beſt that can be given, does not apply to our ſtate-licentiates. If they miſtake the effect for the cauſe, if they preſcribe Hendick's popular pill as a general curative, and the only noſtrum they are poſſeſſed of, and if by an over-doſe of it, the diſorder of the ſtate (as the honourable reformer his-ſelf very juſtly obſerves, p. 14) "ſhould become incurable, not by the "virulence of their own quality, but by the "unapt and violent nature of the remedies," no apology can be made either for their ignorance or their preſumption, they become ſuch peſts to ſociety.

——— they are ſo bad,
There is no mercy to be had.
They ought to be hang'd alive or fleed,
Or ſerv'd as Romiſh prieſts in Sweed.

The reaſon why they merit * an exemplary puniſhment is obvious. Their error cannot be favourably imputed to an error in judgment only, it muſt be conſtrued an error in the heart. Sir, it can be deemed no other than a falſe judgment, knowingly and willfully given in open violation of the conſtitution. Sir, I am not mounted on the gentleman's meta-

* See the Anathema denounced againſt the violation of Magna Charta.

phorical

phorical hobby-horſe. I would not have it be underſtood that I am ſpeaking figuratively or metaphorically. I ſay, in plain, proper terms, that not a writ of error, but a writ of falſe judgment, lies againſt any judge, who ſhall give his voice in any court of judicature within this realm, in expreſs violation of the conſtitution. In ſuch caſe, the maxim is, *ignorantia non exculpabit defectum*. By our laws, Sir, no judge is ſuppoſed to be ignorant of any one of the POINTS expreſsly ſpecified in our conſtitution *.

No one ſpouter in any of your city ſpouting-clubs more frequently uſes the word conſtitution, than the honourable reformer does in this houſe; no one can poſſibly proſtitute it oftener. It is for this reaſon, I ſuppoſe, he induſtriouſly conceals its true, preciſe, and definite meaning. But, Sir, as the honourable gentleman, in the very outſet of his pamphlet, (page 2) expreſsly charges, that the influence of the crown is not only a corrupt influence, but that it takes away every ſhadow of authority and credit from the moſt venerable parts of the *conſtitution*; I ſhall endeavour to wipe off this ſtain and

* Nuls jugemens ſoient donnez contre *les Pointz* des Chartres, 21 Ed. I. c. 2.

odium,

odium, by ſhewing that the crown always *conſtitutionally* had, and always muſt have the ſame degree of influence in the council of the nation, which it now hath. But as this influence cannot be ſeen in its true and proper light now, in any favourable point of view, nor its real origin and firſt ruling cauſe be clearly aſcertained, without our thoroughly underſtanding what the word 'conſtitution' means, I find myſelf under the neceſſity of laying before this houſe, the cleareſt and moſt impartial definition of it I am able to give.

Sir, I muſt apprize the younger members here preſent, that they muſt not, as almoſt always is the caſe, confound the two words, conſtitution and act of parliament, together, as if they had one and the ſame meaning, or as if there was no eſſential difference between the one and the other. "Our conſtitution, properly ſo called, I define to be the original treaties which, at divers epochs, have been entered into, ratified, and confirmed, by and between the people of England, and ſome other perſon or ſtate, *prior* to their taking the oath of allegiance to ſuch perſon or ſtate, the ſeveral articles of which treaties are immutable and indefeaſible laws, in contradiſtinction

to acts of parliament, which are alterable and repealable at pleasure."

Sir, we have four of these treaties, and these four taken collectively form that code of fundamental, immutable laws, properly, and emphatically called "THE CONSTITUTION."

From the definition above, it appears then, to make a constitution, it is absolutely necessary, that the parties intending to be *governed*, and the party designated to be *governor*, must, at the time of making such constitution, be under no rightful or acknowledged subjection, or tye whatever, the one to the other. On the other hand, to make an act of parliament, it must be inferred, that the parties *governed*, at the time of making such act, are actually under a sworn allegiance to the party *governing*.

The first of these treaties, or *pacta conventa*, in order of time, is *that* made between the people of Kent in the name of the whole kingdom and duke William of Normandy. The revered law of Edward the Confessor, which is itself a summary of our Danish, Mercian, and West-Saxons laws, is the basis of

of this treaty. It contains ſeventy-one articles, twenty of which, being new laws, added by duke William, the whole was called the COMMON LAW, which venerable name it bears at this day; and it was ſo called, becauſe by its formula, it is expreſsly ſtiled "a Treaty of Peace, Safety, and Concord, inter Anglos, et Normannos, ſimiliter intra Francigenas et Britones, Walliæ et Cornubiæ, et Pictos, et Scotos Albaniæ; ſimiliter Francos, et Inſulicolas, et Provinciarum quæ pertinent ad coronam et dignitatem." This, I ſay, being a treaty of peace, enjoyed *in common* by ſuch a variety of different nations, languages, and people, was for that reaſon called the *Common Law*; and ſo ſacred hath it been always holden, and is of ſuch high authority, that we have many adjudications in our law-books, in proof, that the common law ſhall be a good plea in bar to any act of parliament that may have been made repugnant to the common law.

Our *ſecond* treaty is that between the barons and king John, better known this day by the name of Magna Charta. Its ſtile and formula is *pax et ſecuritas inter* REGEM *et* REGNUM. It conſiſts of forty-nine articles. There is a critical nicety in the wording of

it; for in the formula, the king is ſimply called Rex, but in the actual conceſſion of the articles, he is ſtiled DOMINUS Rex, as if he had no dominion *de facto* until he had granted theſe articles. There is another critical nicety to be obſerved in the high contracting parties; the REX or king is one party; the REGNUM or kingdom is the other. The latin verbs *regnare* and *regere*, will explain this nicety: for in ſtates which acknowledge no king, there the verb *regnare* is invariably uſed by the beſt Latin writers; on the contrary, in ſtates where the king is abſolute, there the verb *regere*. An inſtance of this Auguſtin latinity, we have in Virgil,

—*Tu* REGERE *imperium, Romane, memento.*

The principal object of this treaty was to declare, and revive, certain rights and liberties, part and parcel (as our lawyers phraſe it) of the *common* law, which had either run into deſuetude, or had been forcibly withholden from the barons and the people by king John. It is in all reſpects of equal authority with the *common law* itſelf; and for this reaſon, it is expreſſly declared, 25 Edw. I. that the king's judges, juſtices, &c. ſhall allow it, in all its points, to be pleaded

" come

" come LEY COMMUNE;" and farther, that all judgments given contrary to the articles of it, ſhall be undone, *et pur nient tenus*. We have likewiſe another ſtatute, which denounces a moſt tremendous anathema againſt the violator of this charta, or *revived* common law, concluding in theſe words, " thus may his ſoul for ever ſtink in hell." I have produced theſe extracts from the two ſtatutes alluded to above, to the intent, that this houſe may clearly ſee the characteriſtic, and be able to draw a diſtinct line, between the conſtitution and a ſimple act of parliament.

Our *third* treaty, is that made between the lords ſpiritual and temporal, and the commons, as one of the high-contracting parties, and William and Mary, then prince and princeſs of Orange, as the other. In common parlance, it is generally called, the bill or declaration of rights. It conſiſts only of twelve articles. It hath two objects, firſt to declare, and revive, certain rights which had been invaded: *ſecondly*, to eſtabliſh, upon *conſtitutional* principles, the proteſtant in the place of the Roman catholic religion. This great work, which was a phenomenon in the political world, had been begun by Henry the eighth, and various acts of parliament

ment had been made in favor and ſupport of it; but ſtill they were only acts of parliament: to ſpeak the truth, they were acts of tyranny; and if our judges had dared to do their duty, they muſt, *ex officio*, have admitted either the common law, or the great charter, as a good plea in bar to any of theſe acts. For it is a maxim, in all caſes where preſcription cannot be conſtitutionally pleaded, "that whatever is bad, *ab initio*, the ſame ſhall not acquire any additional ſtrength or authority by mere tract of time. James the third knew the force of this maxim, and alſo the inherent weakneſs of the acts of parliament above alluded to. He conſidered the ~~Roman catholic~~ *Proteſtant* religion, as it really was, the *faſhionable*, but not the *eſtabliſhed* religion of the kingdom. He was reſolved to reſtore the old eſtabliſhed religion, but he went about it in a very aukward manner. He was reſolved to do that by his own ſingle authority, which a hundred acts of parliament of his predeceſſors could not ſeparately, nor even accumulatively, effect. This was an ill-adviſed attempt, not only to mend a *malum per pejus*, but a *pejus per peſſimum*. He failed in the execution. In the firſt inſtance, he was a martyr to faſhion or the ton; in the ſecond, he was

a

a martyr, either to his own weakneſs of intellect, or to the badneſs of his heart. On his abdication, an *inter-regnum*, which the gentlemen of the long robe pretend, cannot happen in this kingdom, actually took place. For the houſes of Savoy and Conti, as heirs to the crown in the Roman catholic line, not chuſing to riſk the danger of ſtemming the torrent of the *ton*, and the prince of Orange *(jure uxoris)*, though a proteſtant, yet not being the rightful heir, declined ſtepping into the throne on ſo unſtable, precarious, and *repealable* a tenure, as that of acts of parliament, avowedly *anti-conſtitutional*. The conſequence was, that no heir of the blood royal any longer *exiſting* (for *de non apparentibus & non exiſtentibus, eadem eſt ratio)* the two treaties (in part recited as above) became void, through want of parties; I ſay *parties*, becauſe only one of the high contra-acting parties to it did then virtually exiſt: and every treaty is a covenant or convention between two or more perſons or ſtates. Thus the PEOPLE having become a lawful, full, and free power, qualified to enter into any new treaties, with whatever ſtate or perſon they ſhould pleaſe, and to adopt whatever mode of religion they in their wiſdom ſhould think fit, entered into this third

treaty

treaty or bill of rights, which I am now ſpeaking of, and by virtue of which, the proteſtant religion became the rightful, eſtabliſhed, indefeaſible religion of the whole Britiſh empire.

Sir, our fourth and laſt treaty, is that of the union. It conſiſts of thirty-eight articles, twenty-five reſpect the *civil*, and the remaining thirteen articles, the *eccleſiaſtical* government of Scotland. This treaty hath alſo the two characteriſtics, eſſentially neceſſary to form and found a conſtitution. *Firſt*, it was made at a time when each kingdom was a ſeparate, diſtinct kingdom, and as independent of each other as the electorate of Hanover is, at this hour, independent of Great Britain.

Secondly, all the articles in it are aſcertained to be ſo many fundamental, immutable, indefeaſible laws, as more explicitly will appear on a reference to the treaty itſelf, which is printed at large in all our ſtatute books.

Theſe four treaties collectively taken, I ſay, Sir, again, and it cannot be inculcated too often, form that code or ſyſtem of fundamental

damental laws, emphatically called, "The Conſtitution." And to talk of any other ſtatutes, acts of parliament, or judicial determinations, either in Weſtminſter-hall, or in the houſe of lords, as *conſtitutional*, if they be repugnant to, or ſubverſive of any one of the articles in the *conſtitution*, as it now ſtands complete and perfect, is talking wildly, without a clue, without knowledge, without SCIENCE.

The queen of England who had the honour to put the finiſhing and all-perfecting hand to this code or ſyſtem of laws, gave a motto to the armorial bearings of this realm, highly expreſſive of her juſt idea of that code, namely, that it could not admit any addition or ſubſtraction, under colour of any amendment or otherwiſe, but that every article ought to remain "*ſemper eadem.*"

Sir, this ſhort ſyſtem of fundamental laws, the whole of which in *brevier* types might be printed on half-a-ſheet of paper, which then we might wear as a phylactera at our hearts, as the Jews do their law of Moſes, is ſufficient of itſelf for the wiſe government of the whole Britiſh empire, wide and diſperſed as its various parts and members lie. And I

am clearly convinced, that, inſtead of paſſing our time this ſeſſion of parliament in reſcinding and aboliſhing a few ſine-cures and unmerited penſions, the greateſt and indeed the only real ſervice we could do the public at large, would be to reſcind and aboliſh every ſtatute, and act of parliament which hath been made from the ninth of Henry the Third to the twenty-firſt of George the Third incluſive.

Sir, I deemed it neceſſary to lay before you theſe hiſtorical data, in order previouſly to make good the ground I have to travel over. For now, if I mention or allude to the firſt treaty or firſt branch of our conſtitution, it will be clearly underſtood what I mean, and ſo of the ſecond, third, and fourth branches of it. This is the only way we can argue with perſpicuity, the only way that we can reaſon with certainty in political debates.

Sir, by virtue of the firſt treaty, our kings of England actually ſtand ſeiſed of more than thirteen hundred baronies, more than one hundred towns *ſending members to parliament*, beſides all the caſtles or conſtableries, all the foreſts and chaces in the kingdom.

dom. This, Sir, is their landed patrimony, and from its utter inalienability is called "*Sacrum* "*Patrimonium*;" the word "*ſacrum*," to prevent any cavelling about it, like the word *agion* in Greek, and *kadoſh* in Hebrew, only means ſomething that is ſet a-part and appropriated to ſome particular perſon, or for ſome particular purpoſe. So that by the phraſe, *ſacrum patrimonium*, is underſtood that landed eſtate which by the conſtitution is ſet a-part and appropriated to the crown, which can be holden by no other perſon but the king or queen, or other perſon holding under the king or queen, but ſtill to the ſpecial uſe and behoof of the crown. What the rental of this crown-eſtate is, we may learn from Odericus Vitalis, a contemporary hiſtorian, who ſtates that the king received from it a clear income of one thouſand and ſixty pounds ſterling money, thirty ſhillings and three farthings a-day, throughout the whole year; not including, in this eſtimate, fines, reliefs, and a multiplicity of other articles of finance, which daily came into the treaſury. Out of this *landed* fund our kings maintained, not only the navy and peace-eſtabliſhment of this kingdom, but they alſo ſupported the dignity of their own houſehold, paid the ambaſſadors they ſent to

foreign courts, gave the *aurum reginæ* to the queen-conſort, aſſigned dowries to their queens-dowager, ſettled ſplendid eſtabliſhments on their ſons and other branches of the blood royal, gave ample marriage portions to their daughters, and had at leaſt *one thouſand ſeats in parliament* at their own diſpoſal, and all of them accordingly filled with their own tenants *in capite*. All theſe expences were defrayed out of the *landed* hereditaments of the crown, without putting the reſt of the nation, in times of peace, to the contribution of one ſingle ſhilling. In war-time indeed, or when the kingdom was apparently in danger of an invaſion, the crown called for the military ſervice of the greater and leſſer barons (the latter now called Freeholders) and alſo for the reſpective quotas of all the cities and other walled towns, not by way of *perſonal* ſervice, but as our firſt treaty expreſsly mentions "*pro viribus* "*ſuis, & facultatibus pro poſſe ſuo.*"

This ſummary ſtatement of the conſtitutional power of the crown is ſufficient of itſelf to ſilence all the clamour againſt the preſent war-eſtabliſhment of our fleets and armies. Numerous in the extreme, and burthenſome to the public, as they may ſeem to

ſuper-

ſuperficial reaſoners and ignorant politicians, yet the war-eſtabliſhment of this mighty navy of ours, what will it appear in point of the number of its ſeamen, when compared with the ordinary *peace-eſtabliſhment* of our navy in the reigns of Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Edgar, whoſe annual fleets, independent of their army, were manned with two hundred and eighty thouſand ſeamen, and that too, rather to exerciſe and train them to naval habits, than to encounter any foreign enemy, as our Latin hiſtorians, Malmeſbury, Florentius, Brampton, and Abbas Jornalenſis record, varying not eſſentially from one another?

If I refer you to the conſtitutional armies of our kings on their war-eſtabliſhment, perſons, who are unacquainted with our hiſtory, will be equally ſurprized when I tell them, that Richard the Second at a period of time, when this nation might reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have exhauſted the greater part of its ſtrength and treaſure, found himſelf ſtill enabled to take the field with three hundred thouſand foot, and forty thouſand horſe. In preſent ſceptic age, the fact perhaps may be called into doubt. But it ſtands well atteſted by Walſingham, the biographer of

of that king, and his teſtimony is the more to be depended-upon, as Emillus, a French contemporary hiſtorian, who had no reaſon to magnify the Engliſh army at that time, confirms the account.

If we come to times nearer our own, we may ſee Henry the Eighth parading the plains in the vicinage of Calais with an army of one hundred and eighty-five thouſand infantry, and forty thouſand cavalry, all well-found and well-equipped by virtue of their reſpective military tenures, without laying any one tax upon the people, or running the nation into debt one ſingle ſix-pence. On the ſame principle, but half a century ſtill nearer the preſent times, we may ſee the daughter of that king commanding an army of one hundred and ſixty thouſand foot, accompanied by forty thouſand horſe, and a navy of one hundred and forty ſhips of war: a navy adequate to the purpoſes for which that princeſs raiſed it, for it diſperſed and ſhattered to pieces the Invincible Armada of Spain.

Navies and armies, thus raiſed by military tenure, were formed in a few months, and did their buſineſs in a few weeks; they had

had no intereſt, as mercenary troops may have, to protract the war. The conſtitutional finance of this kingdom is *ferroitium gladii*, the artificial and ruinous one is that of funding.

Sir, if the kings of England could at all times thus conſtitutionally raiſe ſuch fleets and armies as theſe I have juſt now mentioned; if, agreeable alſo to the conſtitution, they could bring *into parliament at leaſt one thouſand* of their own immediate tenants, certainly we are not to look up to the preſent, comparatively narrow, and I am ſorry to ſay, inadequate ſcale of our fleets and armies, much leſs to the comparatively very ſmall number of court-dependents now in parliament, as the origin and firſt-ruling cauſe of the preſent influence of the crown, which, according to a late reſolution of this houſe, is ſuppoſed to have increaſed, is ſtill increaſing, and ought to be diminiſhed.

Unfounded and falſe, as I have ſhewn this ſuppoſition to be, yet the honourable gentleman taking it for granted, falls immediately to work upon it, and as a preliminary ground for ejecting a dozen or two members

out

out of this and the other houſe, ſuppreſſes a dozen or two of places, places eſſential to the dignity, eſſential to the very welfare and well-being of the crown. I ſay eſſential to the welfare and well-being of the crown; becauſe it is highly neceſſary that the kings of England, who have anti-conſtitutionally granted the landed property of the crown to private individuals, ſhould either have thoſe ſpecific grantees, or at leaſt others in their ſtead, always in parliament to ſee that the patrimony of the crown *ne quid* PLUS *caperet detrimenti.*

Sir, this argument, which is founded upon the ſtricteſt principles of the conſtitution, is, I am perſuaded, quite new to the honourable gentleman; it never occurred to him before, and his total ignorance of it hath been the cauſe of his labouring under one continued error from the beginning quite to the very end of his pamphlet. He hath conſidered himſelf as one of the repreſentatives of the people. In that word "people" lies the ſole error. And granting it had not been an error *per ſe*, yet the honourable gentleman, taking it for gold of Ophir, hath hammered and hammered it ſo thin, and expatiated it to ſuch an extent, that one breath more from his own lips would certainly have puffed away

away the whole ſuperficial fabric into the air, and into air itſelf.

To ſay, as we do in common colloquy, that the commons in parliament aſſembled repreſent the *people* of England, Sir, it is a vulgar error. I will explain myſelf; but I muſt make a little digreſſion.

Sir, the kingdom of England contains between nine and ten thouſand baronies, lordſhips, or manors. Upon the original, political diviſion of the whole lands of this realm, thirteen hundred of theſe baronies were allotted to the crown, for the ſpecial purpoſes I have already mentioned. Our kings ſummoned the crown-tenants of theſe baronies to parliament at the ſame time and for the ſame purpoſe that they ſummoned the other barons (not tenants *in capite*) that is to ſay, in the firſt inſtance, to aſſeſs a general aid or auxilium; and in the *ſecond*, to watch and take care, that in ſuch aſſeſſment the crown-lands ſhould not be over-aſſeſſed. And thus our kings conſtitutionally had a proportionate number of their own immediate tenants in the great council of the kingdom, there to be ready ſo to vote, that the landed property and juriſdictions of the crown ſhould

be charged, but not overcharged, or in other words, that the crown ſhould contribute its proper quota to the exigencies of the public, but no more.

Sir, the whole land in this kingdom is the property of the public. The primary ſeiſin of it is in the public. The ſeveral tenants or holders of this land, by whatſoever names they may be diverſified, are only truſtees for the public; if we are ſeiſed of any part of theſe eſtates, and which by common uſage of ſpeech we call *our own*, it is becauſe each truſtee, in conſideration of his care, trouble, ſervice, and expence attending his truſt, is allowed for his private uſe and behoof a reaſonable ſhare of the rent in money, or produce in kind, according to the quantity, quality, or dignity of the truſt-land ſo committed to his charge and confidence. If we trace this idea ſtill higher, we ſhall find that the national aſſembly, or great council of the kingdom, is one general repreſentation of the whole landed property of the public. It is for this reaſon, that the fundamental laws contained in our ſecond treaty, or Magna Charta, are called "*Lex* "TERRÆ." Not the act of ſuch or ſuch a parliament, nor of ſuch or ſuch a king,

but

but *lex terræ* the law of the *land*. Not the law of the land-holders, but the law of the *land* itſelf. Agreeable to this accurate mode of expreſſing our ideas, an accuracy never to be deviated from in political diſcuſſions, we find in our third treaty, or Bill of Rights, that the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons, at Weſtminſter, are there ſaid "lawfully, fully, and "freely to *repreſent* all the ESTATES of the "*people*," not the people themſelves, but the eſtates, or landed property of the public. It is a ſoleciſm in language to ſay, that the people repreſent the people. Nor is the blunder a jot mended, by ſaying the people *in* parliament repreſent the people *out* of parliament. For whether in or out of parliament, the people are ſtill the people, they have one and the ſame privileges, one and the ſame political intereſt; and that which is one and the ſame cannot be repreſented by itſelf, much leſs by any part of itſelf. For if it were a part, it would be a miſrepreſentation of the whole, and conſequently not a repreſentation of the people. But this nonſenſe does not occur when we ſay, the people repreſent the land. Coming then again to the point in queſtion, I ſay, that the commons in parliament aſſembled repreſent the *truſt*-

eſtates of the people; but not the people themſelves: the barons repreſent not themſelves, but ſuch of the baronal, *fiduciary* lands, as they hold: and the king, in like manner, repreſents thoſe lands of the public which, for their ſupereminent dignity, are called crown-lands. The peers and commons, without any great inconvenience to themſelves, can give their conſtant attendance upon parliament; but as the king cannot do the ſame, at leaſt in *propriâ perſonâ*, on account of the various occupations and avocations of the kingly office, he is authorized by the conſtitution to have his ſubſtitute in both houſes, and theſe ſubſtitutes are his own immediate tenants, who as ſuch become, *de jure coronæ*, the ſub-repreſentatives of the coronal-lands of the public.

Thus we ſee, the whole landed property of the public is divided into three diſtinct claſſes of common, baronal, and coronal lands; and the principal buſineſs of parliament, when rightly underſtood, is to ſee, that neither the king ſhall uſurp upon, and appropriate to his allotted diviſion, any of the common, or baronal lands on one hand, nor that the peers and commons (as the honourable

nourable gentleman widely and extravagantly propoſes in his plan of reform, page 35.) " ſhall convert the eſtates of the crown, and " throw them into the maſs of *private* pro- " perty on the other hand."

If the *common* lands then have their poſſeſſors and protectors in parliament; if the baronal lands have theirs; it is a policy founded upon equality of juſtice, that the coronal lands ſhould ſtand upon the ſame footing of protection; and that if the king cannot perſonally attend to protect them, it is fitting, it is juſt, it is right, he ſhould have repreſentatives in the high court of parliament, adequate to the quantity and quality of the lands committed to the ſpecial truſt and ſuperintendance of the crown.

If it be objected, as the honourable gentleman does object, page 32, " that the landed eſtates of the crown are already given up to parliament," and that *ceſſante cauſa, ceſſat effectus*; I anſwer, the fact is not true. The landed eſtates of the crown neither are, nor can be *irreſumably* given up to parliament, or to any individual whatever; and granting that they could be ſo given up, the reaſon for the crown's having a ſufficient number of dependents

dependents in parliament, would be ſtronger ſtill.

If the honourable gentleman ſhould ſtill inſiſt that the eſtates of the crown are *given up* to parliament, I would aſk him what he means by the word parliament: it cannot be the commons ſingly, nor the lords ſingly, nor yet the commons and lords cojointly; for neither diſjunctively, nor in their conjunctive capacity, can they be called the parliament; it is high treaſon to aſſert ſuch a doctrine: it would be a denial of the king's ſupremacy. Much leſs can the honourable gentleman mean by the word parliament, that theſe eſtates of the crown are *given up* to the king, as head of the parliament. For that would be a gift from prince Volſius to prince Volſius. Beſides, every gift to be valid, preſuppoſes and implies a power and right in the grantor to give, and a fitneſs and ability in the grantee to take. But the king hath no conſtitutional right or power to grant the eſtates of the crown for any longer term than the life of the grantee, and that too upon the *expreſs condition* of military ſervice, reſerving always the reverſion to the crown; he therefore cannot grant it to parliament, becauſe parliament never dies; and the king would not only loſe his reverſionary intereſt, but the heir, or next ſucceſſor to the

the crown, would be defrauded of his patrimony. Such a grant would have all the characteriſtic properties of a fraudulent conveyance; it would be a grant of a truſt eſtate in perpetuity, by a truſtee who only had a life-eſtate in the premiſes; a grant which diſcharged the eſtate of its truſt-conditions. Is parliament fitly qualified to take ſuch a grant? God forbid.

But, Sir, for argument ſake, let us ſuppoſe, that the crown-eſtates are irreſumeably given up to parliament; let us ſuppoſe, that the kings of England, without any equivocation or mental reſervation, have bonâ fide, agreed to take 900,000 l. a-year in hard guineas, in lieu of the landed eſtates of the crown; let us ſuppoſe, as the fact really is, that the crown-eſtates of England, with thoſe of Scotland and the principality of Wales included, at the very ſame rents they are now demiſed, would produce the annual ſum of five millions ſterling. Would it then follow, that becauſe they had thus changed one ſpecies of income for another, they had therefore diveſted themſelves of their conſtitutional right of having ſuch a number of their own immediate dependents in the great council of the nation, as might be equal to the weight and

and importance, which an eſtate of even of that magnitude (reduced as it thus would be) ought to have in the parliamentary ſcales or balancing power of Great Britain? The eſtates of every individual perſon in the kingdom is ſufficiently repreſented in parliament, either perſonally or *per autrui*; and ſhall that of the king be alone unrepreſented? Becauſe his eſtate cannot be repreſeneed by himſelf, for the reaſon already adduced, ſhall it therefore not be repreſented at all? Shall the five or ſix ſhilling a-year eſtate of a Potwalloper be ſufficiently repreſented *per autrui*, and that of the king not equally ſo? The idea is repugnant to common ſenſe and common juſtice, nor is it leſs ill-judged than it is ill-timed. For, Sir, will any member of this or the other houſe clap his hand on his heart, and upon his honour declare, that the balance of power is at preſent, in reality, in favour of the crown? That it ſubſtantially is not, we may, from evident, ſtubborn, and undeniable facts, conclude. For ſo long as the queens of Great Britain ſhall, *per autrui*, drop a curteſy to that chair for their alimony, and ſo long as the ſovereign of the greateſt empire that ever exiſted, ſhall not feel the dignity and luſtre of his crown diminiſhed, nor demeaned in becoming a ſuppliant to us,

on

on very little derangement in the civil-liſt eſtabliſhment, ſo long the public can have no reaſon to complain of the influence of the crown. A greater proof needs not to be given, that it hath much decreaſed; a more flattering one cannot be given, that it ought not to be diminiſhed.

It hath been ſuper-abundantly proven above, that a certain degree of influence in our parliaments, adequate to the magnitude of the crown-eſtates, is clearly and conſtitutionally veſted in our kings: the conſequence then is uncontrovertibly clear, that ſuch influence cannot be juſtly charged or accuſed of furniſhing matter for any juſt complaint. We muſt therefore look for the real ground of this complaint in ſome other quarter.

Sir, the good people of Great Britain have great and real cauſe for complaint. They cannot go into their houſes, but the very door is taxed. They cannot look through the panes of a window, but they are taxed. They cannot walk within doors or without, at leaſt with ſhoes on, but they find themſelves taxed. They cannot drink a draught of home-brewed ſmall beer, but they are

taxed. They cannot have a grain of ſalt, to preſerve their viands from putridity, but they are taxed. They cannot put on a clean ſhirt, but they are taxed. They cannot work by candle-light, but they are taxed. They feel, they groan under all theſe preſſures, and think it extremely hard that, while they are ſinking under ſuch a load of accumulated and accumulating oppreſſions, they ſhould ſtill be obliged to pay the king every year ſo enormous a ſum as nine hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. Their own knowledge tells them, that if they could ſtint the king's annual expences to three hundred inſtead of nine hundred thouſand pounds a-year, the very ſavings, in this ſingle article, would enable parliament to take off all the above-mentioned taxes, on houſes, window-lights, leather, ſmall beer, ſalt, ſoap, and candles. They grumble and growl, as if the king's civil-liſt eſtabliſhment was the ſole cauſe of all theſe burthens, when, in truth and in fact, the charge is altogether groundleſs, falſe, and inapplicable.

That the people, Sir, who in political matters ſeldom reaſon deeper than the mere organs of their ſenſes enable them, is no wonder; but that there ſhould be found gentle-

gentlemen in this houſe, and noble lords in the other, who can gloſs over, and openly countenance ſo baſe and baſeleſs an opinion, muſt appear extraordinary indeed, and it ſhould ſeem as ſcarcely to be accounted-for without ſuggeſting ſuſpicions of *another* and more dangerous crown-influence than *that* of Great Britain.

But, Sir, to ſhew the weakneſs of this charge, and how eaſily it confutes and defeats itſelf, let us for a moment ſuppoſe, that our gracious ſovereign, ever attentive to the cries of his ſubjects, ſhould fairly meet the people *without doors* on the ſame ground of complaint, might not his majeſty with great juſtice ſay, "Truſty and well-beloved "ſubjects, I am conſcious that the general "taxes muſt bear very hard on you; I am "conſcious that, in particular, my civil-liſt "eſtabliſhment is very burthenſome to you. "Is it your wiſh, is it your real deſire to be "exonerated of your preſent burthens, ſo "far as the payment of my civil-liſt may "directly or indirectly be the occaſion of "them? If your anſwer be in the affirmative, I will meet you half way in ſo virtuous and truly conſtitutional a cauſe. It "is a work that cannot poſſibly be more

" agreeable to you than it is to myſelf.
" Lend me your joint aſſiſtance, and it ſhall be
" accompliſhed without noiſe, and with much
" facility the very next ſeſſion of parliament.
" I will point out the road to you; it is turn-
" pike road all the way; it hath indeed a
" few bars, but theſe, you know, muſt be
" always *open* night and day to the royal
" family, or in caſe of oppoſition the con-
" ſtitution warrants me to cut them down.
" I will explain this matter, it is obvious to
" the meaneſt capacity, it lies on a level
" with all your underſtandings, provided you
" will diveſt yourſelves for a moment of
" that prejudice, which is too apt to darken
" and barricade the cleareſt and moſt open
" avenues to truth. You are to know then,
" truſty and well-beloved ſubjects, that ſe-
" veral of my royal progenitors, kings of
" England, for reaſons only known to them-
" ſelves, in breach of their ſpecial truſt,
" and in violation of the conſtitution, have
" at different periods of time frittered away
" the royal patrimony in private grants to
" various ſubjects of this realm, without any
" valuable conſideration in money, ſervice,
" or otherwiſe: that the very rents of the
" lands ſo granted do actually bring-in at
" this day an income of 5,000,000 ſterling

per

" *per annum*; and that the ſeveral ſubjects
" to whom theſe grants had been made,
" well-knowing the invalidity of the ſaid
" grants, and being perſons of great weight
" in their ſeveral different counties, and of
" great influence in the Britiſh ſenate, com-
" plotted together to obtain certain acts of
" parliament called *Acts of Limitation*, and
" *Nullum Tempus Acts*; under colour of
" which they pretend, that a ſixty years
" quiet poſſeſſion is a bar in law, and pre-
" cludes any king from ever reſuming the
" ſame lands, and re-uniting them to the
" crown. But this is all mere pretext and ſelf-
" iſhneſs, nor hath it the leaſt foundation in
" truth; for an act of parliament avowedly
" made in violation of the conſtitution, and
" at the ſame time for the ſpecial purpoſe of
" plundering the crown, is a nullity *in ſe*,
" and in fact does not require the formality
" of an act of parliament to repeal it.
" Harry the Eighth's act for illegitimating
" the princeſs Elizabeth was one of theſe
" anti-conſtitutional acts of parliament;
" but that princeſs aſcended the throne not-
" withſtanding, nor was it deemed any-
" ways neceſſary to repeal the illegitimating
" act, becauſe it was in fact a nullity *ab*
" *origine*. But as ſeveral kings of England

" have

" have resumed the crown-lands, not by
" virtue of their own prerogative, but by
" the milder and more gracious mode of
" acts of parliament; all that is required
" of your parts, trusty and well-beloved
" subjects, is that you retire to your respec-
" tive houses, and there give one general
" instruction to the several representatives
" of the counties, cities, and boroughs of
" England, Scotland, and the principality
" of Wales, enjoining them to bring in
" and carry through this house, a bill for
" re-uniting in the crown all jurisdictions,
" forests, chases, lands, and estates, and
" for re-instating the Kings of Great Britain
" for the time being in the perception and
" and reception of all the rents and profits
" arising from the same. This is a short,
" easy mode of doing the business; it is con-
" formant to several precedents on similar
" occasions, and it furnishes no handle for
" any clamours against the exertion of a
" prerogative, which from its long dor-
" mancy might be construed by artful and
" ill-designing men to have run into desue-
" tude. Get this bill passed through both
" houses, it shall most certainly have the
" royal assent, with this farther assurance,
" that taxes equivalent to the clear amount

" of

" of the civil-list shall be suppressed and
" abolished; that no more than one million
" sterling shall be appropriated to the crown
" out of the yearly rents or income of the
" crown-lands, in exoneration and lieu of
" the said civil-list establishment; which,
" together with all the remaining rents and
" profits arising from the patrimonial lands
" of the crown, shall be applied to the pub-
" lic service, save and except such fit and
" reasonable share as may enable the present
" holders, and their heirs, to live sumptu-
" ously, honourably, and nobly, as the
" king's tenants ought to live, and as they
" did live in former days. Thus, trusty
" and well-beloved subjects, like a prudent
" parent and skilful physician, I have pre-
" scribed you a safe and speedy remedy. Go
" you immediately to work upon it, you
" have my full permission, authority, and
" hearty concurrence."

Ejaculation.

Quid statis? nolint, atqui licet, esse beati.

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced this little narrative, not so much with the design of seeing so constitutional a plan of reform carried into execu-

execution at preſent, as to ſhew and convince the people *without doors*, that the influence they complain of, the influence which they load with the epithets of baneful, evil, and corrupt, doth not originate in the crown; but, on the contrary, that it originated within this houſe, within theſe walls, within that very chair, Sir, on which you yourſelf are now ſeated. The national debt could have no other origin; if I may be allowed the expreſſion, it was begotten in that chair, it is a ſpurious brat, *nullius filius*, diſowned by its putative parents, thrown upon all the pariſhes in the kingdom, and unknown to the conſtitution; yet, ſpurious as its own nativity is, it gave legitimate birth to the civil-liſt eſtabliſhment, ſo far, I mean, as an act of parliament can legitimate, which by the bye muſt be deemed a paradox, otherwiſe it would be hard to account, how legitimacy could ſpring out of ſpuriouſneſs, ſince it hath to this hour been an incontrovertible maxim, that *nihil dat quod non habet.*

Thus we ſee this very civil-liſt eſtabliſhment had no other foundation for its firſt exiſtence and ſubſequent continuance, but that of an act of parliament. But, Sir, every act of parliament

liament hath one inſeparably incidental vice interwoven in its very frame and eſſence, namely, that it is repealable, and that too not unfrequently *ad arbitrium popularis auræ*: Witneſs alſo that long ſtring of acts, which in Harry the Eighth's reign (if the expreſſion be not too bold) did actually *diſ-eſtabliſh* the the *eſtabliſhed* religion of this country. Witneſs the Jew-act; witneſs our late American acts, and our ſtill later acts reſpecting the Catholics. This parliamentary power of creating and uncreating being well underſtood in this houſe, and being likewiſe carried into practice almoſt every ſeſſion in ſome one inſtance or other, it unavoidably renders the civil-liſt eſtabliſhment not quite ſo ſtable as the poſſeſſor of it for the time being could wiſh; and when he comes not only to be confronted, but affronted on every perſonal money-application, when it is hinted by another ſenator, both *vivâ voce* and in print, p. 14, "*That in hot reformations*, in "what men call making clear work, ſome part "of the ABDICATED grievance is recalled "from its exile to become a corrective of the "correction——when, I ſay, the ſame reform-"ing ſenator tells him, page 12, that the "beſt criterion of a wiſe government is, well "to know the beſt time and manner of "yielding what it is *impoſſible* to keep," a

language ſo pointedly by ſatirical within doors, and ſo unwarrantably indecent without, muſt naturally put any poſſeſſor of a civil-liſt ſo circumſtanced upon his guard, and impell him as it were *ſe defendendo*, if not to uſe violent means, at leaſt to recur to the adoption of ſuch meaſures for the guaranteeſhip and ſecurity of his property, as the conſtitution authoriſes and enjoins. The conſtitutional guarantees of the crown properly are, as I obſerved before, the tenants or dependents of the crown elected into parliament in right of certain borough-towns, which very towns are part and parcel of the ancient crown-property of this realm. And here again, the neceſſity or ſelf-defence of calling theſe crown-dependents into parliament does not originate in the crown, but in thoſe ſpeeches within the houſe, and publications out of it, which evidently tend to make the tenure of the civil-liſt eſtabliſhment not only precarious and uncertain, but abſolutely and ſolely dependent upon the two houſes of parliament. This doctrine is totally repugnant to the principles of our conſtitution; for no one of the three branches of the legiſlature is to be dependent on the other; but each is to act in its own proper ſphere and circle, freely, independently, and uncontrouledly.

uncontrouledly. I ſay uncontrouledly, becauſe the commons have no right to controul the peers, nor the peers the commons, nor the peers nor commons the king, nor the king either the peers or commons. In this reſpect, the government of this kingdom breathes the pure ſpirit of liberty, freedom, and independence. It is therefore idle as it is injurious, to attribute to the crown an influence, which the honourable reformer muſt certainly know in his own heart and conſcience, is attributable to the national debt, and to the national debt only.

It is ſo many years ſince the honourable gentleman frequented, figured in, and ſtole a private march out of the purlieus of Jonathan's coffee-houſe, that he ſeems to have forgotten, this once goodly kingdom of Great Britain is now become a nation of bankers, money-lenders, uſurers, ſpeculators, contractors, ſtock-jobbers, and gamblers, and that this houſe holds the national purſe to be ſcrambled-for by them all. This purſe, ever ſince it came into our hand, which is about ninety years, hath been conſtantly draining itſelf, like a perpetual milch cow, to fatten one half of this corrupt and corrupting body politic, and to keep the other half juſt above

water, without any other but a temporary advantage now-and-then to the ſtate. A new ſpecies of revenue-places, and conſequently, revenue placemen, unknown to this country a century ago, have gradually formed an irreſiſtible phalanx. They are the very ſperm and ſpawn of the national debt. They grew with its growth, they ſtrengthened with its ſtrength. Their number now is between ſix and ſeven thouſand. Here, Sir, is a copious, extenſive field of influence. And I may ſay with certainty, where one vote is given in the Britiſh ſenate, under the conſtitutional influence of thoſe crown-places which the honourable reformer would now either ſuppreſs or aboliſh, twenty votes at leaſt are given under the anti-conſtitutional influence of theſe new-created revenue-places.

If the honourable gentleman be really in earneſt, if he hath really no other object in view, but a noble, public-ſpirited plan of reform; in the name of common ſenſe, why will he thus begin at the wrong end? Why will he lop-off eighteen or twenty places, which are co-æval with the crown, and leave the primary ſource and firſt-ruling cauſe of all corruption in its full-bloom, fly-blown entirety? What is this tampering, ineffectual

tual patch-work, but laying rouge, as it were, upon the pale cheek of ſome faſhionable *impure*; it may indeed give a roſy bloom for the preſent, and impoſe upon the eye; the ſtricken deer may fly from Ranelagh to Vauxhall, and range the whole circle of nocturnal revels: but the vermillion thus ſuperficially applied, reaches not the latent cauſe and ſeat of the complaint, the wound keeps feſtering all the while within, *et hæret zonæ lethalis arundo.*

Why does not the honourable reformer then go at once to the root of the evil? Certainly this new revenue ſyſtem is no part of the conſtitution, it is rather an unſightly overgrown When upon it, full of corruption. Its weight and influence pervades and perverts all the ancient, natural ſtreams, and channels of government. The expence in keeping up this political remora, beſides that it diſorders and retards every motion of the executive power, the expence, I ſay, in keeping it up is tremendous; it amounts to little leſs than ſix millions ſterling annually. It is equal to the pay of one hundred thouſand ſeamen, and the conſtruction of twenty new capital ſhips of the line yearly. It would without firing one gun, either in the Park or at the Tower, inſtantly

inſtantly proclaim peace with America. It would, as effectually as the dreadfulleſt of all hurricanes, inſtantaneouſly ſhatter and ſhipwreck the whole maritime league combined againſt us. And to come nearer home, if any conſideration can be nearer and dearer to a true Briton than the proſperity of the Britiſh navy, it would entirely defeat and utterly annihilate all corrupt influence for the future.

Sir, I mention not theſe reaſons, weighty as they are, that they ſhould be underſtood to convey any opinion of mine reſpecting the fitneſs or unfitneſs of ſponging-off the national debt, or of placing the national purſe in other hands; that would only be grafting innovation upon innovation, and the remedy full as bad as the diſeaſe. I adduce the cogent reaſons alluded to above, for no other end or purpoſe, but to prove and enforce, by arguments equivalent to mathematical demonſtration, that the corrupt influence ſo falſely and injurioufly attributed to the crown, doth not originate in the crown, but in the ſuppoſed-permanent ſecurity of the national debt, which itſelf cannot have originated in any other branch of the legiſlature than in this houſe, and this houſe only. And that it therefore

therefore ill-becomes any ſenator within theſe walls to ſound the alarm-bell againſt taxes or their concomitant influence, which are one and the ſame thing; more eſpecially as we cannot but know, or at leaſt it is our duty to know, that by the fifty-fifth article of our firſt treaty, it is expreſsly declared, ratified, and confirmed, that the ſubjects of England ſhall not only be free *ab omni injuſtâ exactione*, but *ab omni tallagio*, that is to ſay, nothing but their juſt and *debitum ſervitium* ſhall be exacted, and that there ſhall be no ſuper-taxation whatever.

It remains now to ſhew, that this plan of reform will not tend to diminiſh the influence complained of, and that the ſale of the foreſt and other crown lands, as an article of finance, can anſwer no one important purpoſe of the ſtate.

Sir, the honourable gentleman, by way of paving the road to bring in his very modeſt bill for the ſale of the foreſt and other crown-lands, rents, and hereditaments of the ſeveral principalities, palatinates, and duchies, mentioned in the bill before us, lays down one general, fundamental dictum. This dictum neither involves in its texture the accidents

common

common to every problem, nor the properties of a maxim. For on the one hand, we muſt not argue upon it as a problematical propoſition, admitting a poſſible latitude of diſquiſition; nor can we, on the other hand, take it for granted as an abſolute, revered, unqueſtionable maxim of ſtate, without flying in the face of all antiquity, and ſetting our own fallible judgment far above the wiſdom of the all-wiſe Being, who hath given to mankind one perfect model of a ſtate, the obſervance of, or deviation from which, hath, in all ages, ſtamped the *Conditores* of their ſeveral and reſpective countries, with the name of wiſe or weak princes. Providentially, Sir, for England, the architectonic founders of this country, followed that illuminated and ſacred model in the allotment of the landed property of this monarchy and kingdom, as near as the differential locality of its extent and boundaries would at firſt admit.

By the word "*monarchy*," I mean ſuch foreſts, chaſes, baronies, and other landed hereditaments, as were originally apportioned for the ſupport of the crown, and dignity of the ſovereign prince; and alſo to maintain the military-peace eſtabliſhment of the whole empire of England. By the word "*king-*

dom,"

dom," I mean all the remaining Engliſh baronies, and other landed property, which were likewiſe, at the ſame time, apportioned under the ſeveral diſtinct allotments, to the various orders and claſſes of men, to be holden, either by eccleſiaſtical, or military ſervice, or in free and common ſocage.

I am warranted in making this diſtinction between the words *monarchy* and *kingdom*, for in ſo doing, I follow the accurate language obſerved in our firſt treaty, in which, by way of antitheſis or contradiſtinction, to diſtinguiſh the government of England from that of an abſolute monarchy *per ſe*, it is *twice* declared, that *Anglia una eſt* MONARCHIA *et unum eſt* REGNUM. This diſtinction accounts alſo for the ſame correctneſs of language being uſed in our ſecond treaty, or great charter, the formula of which, as I have already obſerved, is, *pax inter* REGEM *et* REGNUM.

Sir, it is not a mere diſtinction; it carries with it a farther eſſential difference. For the word "*monarchia*" clearly gives us to underſtand, that the king, for the time being, hath the *ſole*, free, and uncontroulable government of, in, and over the landed eſtate ſo aſſigned, for his ſpecial lot and portion, that

conſequently in its nature, it is not aſſignable either *in toto* or *in parte*, nor can be thrown, as the honourable gentleman propoſes, page 35, "into the maſs of *private* property," without putting the very foundations of the political hemiſphere out of courſe. The bounds of it are not to be broken thro' either by the prieſts or the people, leſt the ſovereign prince break forth upon them.

The mould from which this monarchy and kingdom is caſt, is not of human invention: the original model is ſtill to be ſeen in the inſpired writings of the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 45 & 48. Where the ſpecific, ſeparate portion of land allotted to the ſovereign prince, is not only accurately delineated, but the political reaſons for the prince having ſuch portion aſſigned him, and for his reſting contented with it, are carefully laid-down, as an unerring leſſon of inſtruction for every future wiſe prince, in the following remarkable precept: "thus ſaith, Jeho-"vah Elohim, let *this* portion of land SUF-"FICE you, O princes of Iſrael!—remove vi-"olence and ſpoil—execute judgment and juſ-"tice—take way your TAXES from my peo-"ple, ſaith Jehovah Elohim." And it is highly worth notice, a notice well-underſtood in the Hebrew language, that in delivering theſe important

portant ſtate-maxims, the prophet twice inſerts the words "Jehovah Elohim." Not Jehovah ſingly, nor Elohim ſingly, but Jehovah Elohim conjointly, once at the beginning, and once at the concluſion of the ſentence, to mark, as it were, in double characters, that the Almighty would avenge, by a two-fold puniſhment, the non-obſervers of this truly divine precept. For the words "Jehovah Elohim" where any politic commands given, are always expreſs, or at leaſt imply a denunciation of God's vengeance in caſe of diſobedience, and if they be repeated as they are in the preſent inſtance, they denote a two-fold puniſhment will be inflicted on the offenders.

Sir, notwithſtanding this appointment of land for the ſeparate department, and ſpecial duties of the ſovereign prince, in the organization of a well-formed ſtate, be copied from the ſacred ſcriptures; notwithſtanding it hath the ſanction and imprimatur of the beſt and moſt ancient political theoriſts, ſuch as Plato, and Ariſtotle, yet comes in the eloquent Edmund Burke, Eſq; the great reformer, non-conformer, and deformer of the Britiſh conſtitution, with his *ipſe dixit*, and tell us point blank, p. 32, "a landed eſtate

is certainly the very worſt which the crown can poſſeſs."

On this ſandy foundation, with ſuch untempered mortar as this, doth the honourable artiſt build the chief merit of his plan of reform, little profiting by the fate of his brother architect, who building his houſe not on the ſcriptural rock above alluded-to, but upon a looſe, ſandy ſoil, the floods came, and beating againſt it, ſuddenly it fell down, and the ruin of *this* houſe was great as it was ſudden.

A plan, Sir, fundamentally bad, cannot be made good by the livelieſt flaſhes of wit, much leſs by ridicule and drollery. For, can it be reaſonably expected, that the royal aſſent ſhall be given to the abolition of all the ancient offices appurtenant to the principality of Wales, merely becauſe the droll Wag, Edmund Burke, Eſq; hath the facetious talent of ſetting this houſe a-roar, in repeated burſts of laughter for hours, "with pouring "down his goat-herds from the mountain of "Cader Edris, or vomiting forth his miners "from their deep and ſooty caverns?" Happy! for this nation, could the corrupt influence complained-of be diminiſhed by the droll-wag, Edmund Burke, Eſq; becoming the merry

merry Andrew, on this, or any other public ſtage, and turning his own mountebank plan of reform into buffoonery and burleſque. But alas! neither the true * pativinity of this droll wag, nor the more noiſy hammer of his countryman and great rival in oratory, the mellifluous Mr. Chriſtie, were it to knock down all the foreſts, all the lands, all the rents, and all the other crown-hereditaments, the bill propoſes to put-up topublic auction, would decreaſe this influence in quantity or quality; and all that we ſhould gain by thus driving the foul fiend out of our houſes at the lobby-door, would be forcing it to come with violence in at the windows over our heads, and perhaps break them about our ears into the bargain. Such a ſcheme, Sir, is by no means calculated to produce the deſired effect. Sir, if you would have this corruption put-on incorruption, we muſt take away the co-exiſtent cauſe of that corruption: that cauſe, it hath ſuper-abundantly been proven, is the national debt. They are twin-brothers, they came into the world cloſe upon the heels of each other; they were nurſed together on the ſame foſtering lap; they kept exact pace together in their imperceptible growth; and whenever the elder of the two

* Read, *paddy-vinity. ſic correge meo periculo. Martinus Scriblerus.*

ſhall

ſhall die either a natural or a violent death, the younger will not ſurvive one ſingle ſeſſion of parliament—the national debt!—the national debt—*hinc illæ lachrymæ!*

But let us, Sir, in imagination at leaſt behold the honourable reformer in his plenitude of earthly happineſs, in his zenith of terreſtrial glory; let us for argument's ſake ſuppoſe, that the bill now before us had paſſed both the houſes; that his majeſty ſeated on his throne, ſurrounded by his enrobed peers, attended by his faithful commons, had actually given the ſignificant, ſuicidal nod, that the Norman linguiſt had pronounced the fatal ſentence, "*Le roy le veut*," that the guns in the Park and their echoing brothers at the Tower (inſtead of the Saxon *mot-bel*, or ringing of the *bell*) had promulgated the birth of this miſcreant, miſcreated, parliamentary abortion — this *monſtrum—horrendum—informe—ingens—cui lumen ademptum.* Let us even go with the honourable gentleman to the end of his journey, and conclude, that in compliance to the utmoſt extravagance of his wiſhes, the principality of Wales, the county-palatine of Cheſter, the dutchy of Lancaſter, and the county-palatine of Lancaſter, together with

with the dutchy of Cornwall were *all*, all, not only *perfectly* united (but as he, p. 94, incongruouſly expreſſes it) * *more perfectly* united to the crown: let us conclude that all the various offices and places incidental to to theſe five ſub-ordinate ſceptres were all ſuppreſſed: and finally, that every other office or place growing either out of the foreſt-lands, or other crown-lands, or the royal houſhold, or the mint, had ſuffered the proſcription he ordains. What then? Will that ſide the houſe be one member the ſtronger, or will there be one court-lord the fewer elſewhere? If we ſay there will, we either proclaim our own ignorance of the conſtitution, or we belie our own conſciences, and the truth is not in us. We may indeed drive adminiſtration from this artificial, temporary Hold, but ſhall not we conſtrain the

* The honourable gentleman uſes the phraſe "more "*perfectly*," but does not ſeem to underſtand the true and only meaning of the *pluſquam perfectum* degree. For it implies either a perſon or a thing, which is not only perfect itſelf, but which hath alſo the power of conferring perfection to ſome other perſon or thing: and this *pluſquam perfectum* degree is never uſed by correct, intelligible writers in any other ſenſe. But the honourable gentleman by thus *more perfectly* uniting theſe minor ſovereignties in the crown, takes from the crown the very power of conferring this ſpecies of ſovereignty on any other perſons for the future.

crown *ipſo facto* to have recourſe to a much ſtronger and a much more eligible eminence? An eminence, Sir, where the miniſter will have no occaſion for the pitiful arts of corruption; where Corniſh boroughs, Cinque ports, and Chiltern hundreds, will no longer diſturb his repoſe, nor furniſh matter of complaint, either within doors or without: an eminence, Sir, from which the kings of Great Britain may with their own eyes behold their own fertile, wide-extended domains, their own hereditary, conſtitutional landed-eſtates, cultivated by their own tenants; and thoſe tenants well-cloathed and well-fed, compoſing an army ſixty thouſand ſtrong, for the peace-eſtabliſhment of this realm. Sir, if we drive the crown to extremities, no middle meaſure, I apprehend, can be adopted, and every diſpaſſionate, impartial reaſoner muſt allow, that either the preſent influence of the crown, which now ſtands upon one and the ſame falſe principle with the national debt, muſt not be diminiſhed, or if it be diminiſhed, that we then endanger a general, unexceptional reſumption of all the crown-lands. I ſhall therefore ſay no more on this ſubject, but proceed to ſhew that the honourable gentleman's intended ſale of lands, numerous and diſperſed as they

are

are in every county of the kingdom, will not, as an article of finance, anſwer any good or important end to the ſtate.

This ſubdiviſion of his plan the honourable reformer again ſubdivides under *two* diſtinct heads: the *firſt* he diſtinguiſhes by calling it, p. 32, "*the landed eſtate of the* "*crown*," which ſame eſtate by-the-bye, and in the very ſame paragraph he tells us, "*is* "*not the eſtate of the crown, and be it whoſe* "*eſtate it will, it is of no great value.*" The *ſecond* head he diſtinguiſhes by the name of foreſt-lands. I will ſpeak upon each head in the ſame order of ſucceſſion.

With reſpect, Sir, to this landed eſtate of the crown, or not of the crown (for the honourable gentleman ſometimes calls it crown-property and ſometimes property not of the crown, juſt as it ſuits his purpoſe for the preſent moment) if in purſuance of the bill before us it ſhould be ſold by public auction, I believe it will be the firſt landed eſtate, either in this or any other country, that ever was ſo ſold, and previous to the ſale of which, neither the vendor nor the auctioneer had formed to themſelves any idea of the net ſum, or nearly the net ſum, it pro-

bably might ſell for. An ignorance of the real value of the commodity to be ſold by no means forebodes a good ſale. But how, in the name of goodneſs, can a good ſale be expected, when the honourable reformer turns public crier, and juſt before the auction begins, thunders out, O-yes! O-yes! you are to take notice, p. 34, "I conceive "it unwiſe, Mr. Chriſtie, to ſcrew up the "ſale to the utmoſt, or *even to ſuffer bidders* "*to enhance according to their wiſhes: if it be* "*objected, Mr. Chriſtie, that theſe lands ſell* "*at a low market: this is anſwered by ſhew-* "*ing, as I do in my pamphlet, p. 33, that* "*money at preſent is at high price. So you* "*may fobb them off by telling them, that one* "*balances the other. Lands ſell at the cur-* "*rent rate, and nothing can ſell for more.*" This may be very fine muſic, piping hot from the lips of our celebrated orator; but unfortunately it hath no charms for a chancellor of the exchequer, it does not come home *crura thymo plena*, it does not enrich the public ſtock.

Come we then to the foreſt-lands: will the ſale of theſe turn out more beneficial to the public? are the fiſcal coffers to be enlarged in order that they may be able to contain the

the purchaſe-money? No ſuch good news, alas! is to be expected even from this quarter; and that you will ſay is rather ſtrange. For theſe are all *virgin* lands, lands which never yet felt the plough-ſhare nor harrow of parliament, lands on which parliament never dared to lay a finger before. They remain at this day in the crown, as they have unalienably done from the time of king Brute, the founder of this monarchy and kingdom, the commencement of whoſe reign bears date 2855 years prior to the Chriſtian æra. However let us not deſpair, the quack-bill now before us ſeriouſly undertakes radically to cure the foreſt-lands of this ſtubborn, chronical diſeaſe, and when the Panacea ſhall have wrought this *extra-ordinary* cure—what then?—why, Sir, by a beautiful figure which pervades the whole Burkian, new ſyſtem of rhetorick, called "Inconſiſtency," he declares, p. 34, "that the revenue to be "obtained from the ſale of the foreſt-lands "will"—what?—why, "will not be ſo "conſiderable, *he believes*, as many people "have imagined."

This being the caſe, ſo far as we may rely on the honourable reformer's own perſonal knowledge in the *firſt* inſtance, and his bare belief

in the *ſecond*, we may fairly conclude, at leaſt from his own teſtimony, that neither the ſale of the landed eſtate of the crown, nor the ſale of the foreſt-lands, can either ſeparately or jointly be conſidered as an object of finance. When we therefore hear the honourable gentleman talk, in p. 94, of "applying the produce of theſe ſales to the "ſervice of the public," can we forbear ſmiling at the pompoſity of his profeſſions, or can the buz of his popularity be envied, when we know it is to be catched by ſuch flimſy fly-traps and cobweb filaments as theſe? Sir, there is an invariable fatality attending all this gentleman's public declarations and public profeſſions, they always in the end or in effect turn out to be juſt the reverſe of what he gave them out for. Behold him, in page 49, ſuppreſſing places and placemen by the dozen; you think he hath weeded the royal houſhold of all corruption, root and branch, and that he hath not left a poſſible germ to renovate its noxious influence. Turn but your eye back to pages 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, you ſee the kind, good-natured creature repleniſhing the royal houſhold, nay the artillery too, with a new ſwarm of locuſts; and becauſe the very name of *Contractor* is odious to the people, he propoſes, p. 48, "to execute by *contract*, every "thing

" thing that by *contract* can be executed." He gives indeed a very good reaſon for ſo doing, in p. 43, for there he ſays, " it has ever " been found the beſt way, *to do all things* " by a general contract." So that where his plan turns out one placeman, he makes ample amends by introducing three or four. Yes, but he ſays, p. 43, he does this upon an *œconomiſing principle*, and with the ſolemnity of another Solon he, in p. 21, lays down this amazing, wonderful *dictum*, namely, " an " œconomical inſtitution is a neceſſary baſis " for an œconomical adminiſtration:" he ſupports this doctrine with an example, an example worthy, but difficult indeed of imitation in all the great out-lines of his character, I mean the king of Pruſſia; the king of Pruſſia, he ſays, is an œconomiſt, and in *his* royal ſchool it is we may learn the manner of reconciling the ſtate of a court with the ſupport of war. Well, Sir, after this eulogy upon œconomy, who would not be convinced that our reformer was in this reſpect an exemplary *eleve* of the Pruſſian ſchool, and that he could beat all his brother-ſenators in the article of œconomy all *à-loup**. This man of œconomy, this prince of œco-

* The jockey-phraſe all-hollow, is a corruption of the word *a-loup*—*a-loup*—a term of the chaſe uſed in hunting the wolf.

nomiſts,

nomiſts, who was to convince his conſtituents how much he hath improved by his ſtudies in the Pruſſian ſchool of œconomics, ſcruples not, but rather boaſts and glories to vote no leſs a ſum than one million ſterling for the erection of another ſchool, the very enemy of all œconomy, I mean the ſchool for painting, architecture, and antique medals, and that too at a time when we are deeply engaged in a war with France, Spain, Holland, and the American Congreſs. No wonder then, Sir, that the honourable reformer's bill which ſo pompouſly applies all the produce of the ſales of all the crown hereditaments to the public ſervice in page 94, ſhould actually upon his own confeſſion produce nothing at all, or at leaſt nothing worthy of the public aſſiſtance.

But, Sir, will not ill-nature, ſpite, or envy ſay, that the honourable gentleman hath been all this time depreciating and running down the real value of thoſe eſtates, in order to get them at a lower price for himſelf and his four ducal friends, when they come to be ſold? This, I underſtand, is no unuſual trick in Pall Mall and at Garraway's, at one of which markets ouvert theſe lands will probably be put-up to auction, if *that* may indeed be called an *auction*, at which the bidders,

bidders, according to this admirable plan of reform, ſup. 34, ſo far from being egg'd on to ſcrew the ſale up to the utmoſt, will not *even be ſuffered* to enhance one upon another. I do not like ſuch ſuſpicious practices. It is the very life, ſoul, and ſpirit of an auction to have real bidders at every moment, overbidding one another with unabated eagerneſs. This doctrine is ſo well underſtood, that nine times out of ten the learning and valuable talents of an auctioneer (ſee p. 35) would be waſted in a deſert, if it was not for the porcupine phalanx of puffers in the room, which he hires at half a crown a day per head, with each a good dinner, and a full pot of porter into the bargain, for the ſole purpoſe of decoying and wire-drawing the non-mercenary forces to *bid away*, aye, and fire away as faſt and as eagerly as they can. If the lands in queſtion ſhall be brought to ſome ſuch *real* auction as this, it hath been calculated by perſons, very near as knowing and wiſe as ſomebody elſe, that the ſeveral ſales will produce on the whole at leaſt two millions ſterling. But the quantum of the ſum total theſe ſales may produce, depends upon two leading circumſtances. The one is to bring them forward at proper ſeaſons; the other is to put-up the parcels in ſuch ſmall lots as to

come

come within the reach of ſuch of the yeomanry (and no other claſs of people) as can muſter-up two or three hundred pounds at moſt. The honourable reformer adopts quite a different mode; he tells us p. 34, "he "really conceives that a rule of fair *pre-* "*ference* may be eſtabliſhed." Sir, where a great number of acres are to be put-up in one lot, where the purchaſers muſt conſequently either be ſuch landed nobility and gentry as have already more land than they can find tenants for, or ſuch overgrown monied merchants and nabobs as would only lay out the land itſelf in ſuch fanciful or rather falſe improvements, as parks for their deer, paddocks for their ſtuds, or in extenſive viſtos, open lawns, ſheets of water, pineries, and parterres, and thus tranſplant and diſſeminate the luxuries and high price of labour, from the metropolis and its vicinity all over the interior parts of the kingdom, and where a *preference* is avowedly to be given to ſuch un-agrarian purchaſers as theſe, I am not in the leaſt ſurprized that this new-faſhioned *capability*-reformer of our ancient but now-exploded ſyſtem of agriculture, ſhould tell us that the revenue to be obtained from the ſale of the foreſt-lands, will not be ſo conſiderable as many people have imagined. I ſay, I am not

not at all ſurprized if he hath left me any thing to wonder at: it is, how any *preference* can be *fairly* given to any one perſon whoſe lands are to be put-up and ſold by public auction.

Beſides, Sir, how does this mode of ſelling in great lots, and to ſuch unhuſbandlike purchaſers, ſquare and tally with the two principal objects the reformer ſaith he hath in view, namely, improvement of uncultivated waſte land, and the population of the kingdom? If by the words improvement and population, he means to turn the crown and foreſt-lands into ſhrubberies and gardens, then indeed an increaſe of nurſerymen and gardeners in a ten thouſand-fold degree becomes abſolutely neceſſary, and his plan is admirably well calculated to anſwer the end propoſed. But I apprehend the face of the country is already ſufficiently ornamented with that ſkin-deep ſpecies of land-improvement, and it is evident from the numerous advertiſements of unemployed gardeners to be daily ſeen in our public prints, that the kingdom is overſtocked in that ſpecies of population. Sir, believe me, there is no occaſion for any farther increaſe of lawyers, attornies, coach-makers, gardeners, ribbon-weavers,

hair-dreſſers, eſſenced livery ſervants, and drunken alehouſe-keepers; the population we want is a race of yeomanry; a robuſt, well-limbed, healthy, uſeful race of men; men who in time of war ſhall recruit your fleets and armies with ſtrength, vigour, and activity; men, who in the happier moments of peace, ſhall propagate a manlier poſterity, and ploughing their own ſmall landed eſtates redeem you from the humiliating and opprobrious ſhame of importing your own bread-corn from thoſe very countries, which your anceſtors by a ſimple yet ſcientific agriculture before ſupplied. This, Sir, is the only ſpecies of population this country ſtands alone in need of; a population which this houſe by all the ties of reaſon, duty, law, and equity are bounden to encourage and promote. I ſay, *by all theſe ties*, Sir, becauſe it is notorious that the prodigious number of bills for private incloſures, all of which originated in this houſe, are the principal, if not the ſole cauſe of the alarming decreaſe and almoſt total decay of that moſt uſeful and neceſſary ſpecies of population. It therefore behoves this houſe in a ſingular manner to remedy or at leaſt to put a ſtop to any farther depopulation of this kind, as we now have an opportunity to begin upon ſo deſirable

able a work, by adding one clauſe to the bill before us, the expreſs purpoſe of which is, that no lot ſhall be put up for ſale, containing leſs than ten nor more than twenty acres of land, and that no perſon ſhall be capable of buying, or of ever holding any two lots at one time. This meaſure is I apprehend the more neceſſary to be adopted on the preſent occaſion, as the honourable reformer openly declares, " that the ſeveral " *Commons* are to be allotted and compen- " ſated-for upon ideas nearly the ſame with " *the principles upon which we have acted in* " *private incloſures.*" Sir, if this idea of veſting all the crown and foreſt-land in the yeomanry only, and that by ſmall allotments, had not claſhed with perhaps the narrow-minded or ſelfiſh views of our reformer, the expediency and fitneſs, the neceſſity of adopting the propoſition itſelf, could not well have eſcaped the quickneſs of his perception. For though it might not have entertained this houſe with ſuch burſts of laughter as the long-winded ſtory of his *preux Chevalier Probert*, though it might not in his eſtimation have merited an equal number of pages in his voluminous pamphlet, yet, certainly he might have deſtined for it one ſhort, ſolitary paragraph, a poet's corner as it were, or at

leaſt a word or two by way of parentheſis But we ſee nothing of this kind, no, not even one poor monoſyllable, which ſhould ſeem the more extraordinary, as one ſhould think it almoſt impoſſible for any perſon writing on ſuch a ſubject not to lay down ſome general outlines for preventing the farther decreaſe of population, and the preſent rage for the monopolization of farms. This neglect or omiſſion muſt proceed from ſome latent cauſe, ſince we cannot attribute it either to the timidity or baſhfulneſs of our reformer, nor yet to the novelty of the thing itſelf. We have already a precedent for it in our ſtatute books, ready cut and dried, and the honourable gentleman, p. 34. openly declares, "He ſhall never quit pre-"cedents where he finds them applicable." It is for this reaſon, Sir, I deſire the clerk may read the ſixteenth ſtatute of the 4th of Hen. VII. ſpecifying, *inter alia*, the penalty for taking more farms than one.

"For as much as it is to the king our "ſovereign lord great ſurety, and alſo the "ſurety of this realm of England, that the "Iſle of Wight in the county of South^ton^. be "well inhabited with Engliſh people, for the "defence as well of his ancient enemies of "the

" the realm of France, as of other parties,
" the which iſle is lately decayed of peo-
" ple, by reaſon that many towns and vil-
" lages have been beaten down, and the fields
" ditched and made paſtures for beaſts and
" cattels: and alſo many dwelling places,
" ferms and fermholds, have of late time
" been uſed to be taken in one man's hold
" and hands, that of old time were wont to
" be in many ſeveral perſons holds and
" hands, and many ſeveral houſholds kept
" in them, and thereby much people mul-
" tiplied, and the ſame iſle thereby well in-
" habited, the which now by the occaſion
" aforeſaid is deſolate, and not inhabited, but
" occupied with beaſts and cattel, ſo that if
" haſty remedy be not provided, that iſle
" cannot be kept and defended, but will be
" open and ready to the hands of the king's
" enemies, which God forbid; for remedy
" whereof it is ordained, enacted, and eſtab-
" liſhed, by the aſſent of the lords ſpiritual
" and temporal, and the commons in the
" ſaid parliament aſſembled, and by autho-
" rity of the ſame, that from henceforth no
" manner of perſon, of what eſtate, degree,
" or condition he is, or ſhall be, take any
" ſeveral ferms, more than one, of any man-
" nors, lands, and tenements, parſonages or

" tythes

" tythes within the ſaid iſle, whereof the " ferm of them altogether ſhall not exceed " the ſum of ten marks yearly."

The only remark I beg leave to make on this declarative excellent act of parliament is, that although it was made for the ſpecial purpoſe of preventing a depopulation of huſbandmen in the Iſle of Wight, yet the principle of it is no longer become local, it pervades the whole kingdom, and if this bill ſhould be carried into an act of parliament, the only one good that can poſſibly accrue to the nation from it, will be to mould and faſhion it after the exact model of Henry the VIIth's ſtatute, now freſh in your minds.

Having thus amply delineated the glaring impropriety and impolitic tendency of expoſing theſe crown and foreſt-lands to ſale on any other principle than that of a well-executed, well-framed agrarian law, apportioning them into ſmall farms, and rendering thoſe farms neither diviſible by inheritance, nor deviſable by will, to any other claſs of people but the yeomanry only, nor accumulatable even amongſt the yeomanry themſelves; I will, in order that no argument which the honourable gentlemen attempts to

enforce

enforce may paſs unnoticed or unrefuted, turn for a moment to page 27, where he aſks with warmth, and with an air of triumph, for what plauſible reaſon is the principality of Wales, the county-palatine of Cheſter, the duchy and county-palatine of Lancaſter, and the duchy of Cornwall, ſuffered to continue? to indulge the honourable queriſt I will ſelect two or three out of a thouſand reaſons which might be given for the continuance of their exiſtence.

Sir, they are continued to exiſt, in the firſt place, becauſe it is conformant to the conſtitution that they ſhould not be aboliſhed. But this you will ſay is too general a reaſon; I will give you then a particular one. For, ſo long as they are ſuffered to continue, they ſerve as daily mementos to the crown, that a king of England is not an unique, ſolitary Being, ſtanding alone, and aloof from the other orders of the ſtate, and phœnix-like, exiſting *ex ſe, per ſe, et pro ſe ſolo.* On the contrary, by an eaſy natural climax, as the baronage holds a middle rank between the commonalty and theſe principalities and palatinates, ſo theſe principalities and palatinates hold a middle rank between the baronage and the crown; thus forming one body politic,

politic, the reſpective members of which, mutually depend upon each other, in matters of legiſlation, in a co-equal, though not co-ordinate relation, a relation which our kings might very eaſily forget, were they to ſtep at once, as it were, from the cradle to the crown, without any intermediate gradation. This may then be urged as one reaſon for *ſuffering* (as the honourable gentleman is pleaſed to term it) the principalities and palatinates ſtill to exiſt, in order that in this inſtance we may follow the invariable law of nature, *quæ nihil magnum facit per ſaltus.*

The honourable gentleman in the ſame page, propounding another queſtion equally inſidious and jeſuitical, aſks whether theſe principalities and palatinates anſwer any purpoſe to the king? I apprehend they do, and nearly the ſame purpoſe as Gibraltar does.

For this Fort, beſides that it is the *ſecret* and SOLE cauſe that binds and ſecures to us the alliance and trade of Portugal; conſiderations highly worth noticing at this preſent moment, it ſerves the king of England in the capacity of a double key, either to enter the Mediterranean, or the kingdom of Spain at all times, whenever his majeſty ſhall ſo pleaſe. In

like

like manner, though the former kings of England granted leaſes for years, or otherwiſe, of the ſeveral eſtates in the principality of Wales, the county-palatine of Cheſter, the duchy and county-palatine of Lancaſter, and the duchy of Cornwall, yet they very carefully retained to themſelves and their ſucceſſors, kings of England, a ſmall, annual reſerved rent, together with all their reſpective juriſdictions, of whatſoever denomination they might be. Thus by virtue of the reſervation of the ſeveral juriſdictions, they remained ſovereign lords *de jure*, and by virtue of the annual reſerved rent, ſovereign lords *de facto*, and conſequently upon the determination of the reſpective leaſes, might re-enter *de novo* to their own ſpecial uſe and behoof, as the lawyers phraſe it, without furniſhing the leaſt, juſt cauſe of complaint to the immediate repreſentation of the deceaſed leſſees, or any other perſons in the kingdom. It is theſe *jura regalia*, and theſe ſmall reſerved rents, his majeſty, I apprehend, would not wiſh to relinquiſh, as well for the purpoſe already mentioned, as, poſſibly, for that of making ſuitable eſtabliſhments for his own children, upon the preſent leaſes dropping-in; eſtabliſhments, which from their own nature are incommunicable to any ſubjects, thoſe of the royal blood excepted; and laſtly, ſuch

eſtabliſhments only which his majeſty hath in his power at preſent to make, without oppreſſing his people by freſh money-grants in the name of portions for his children. This mode of providing for the blood-royal, by giving them certain portions of land out of the PATRIMONY of the crown, (mark the word *patrimony*) is conformant to the law of God, and likewiſe to our own laws, which are founded on the law of God. In Ezekiel, chapter 46, ver. 11, the form of the grant, and the reaſon of the grant itſelf, is happily preſerved for our obſervance and imitation, where it is ſaid, "the king ſhall not take of "the *people*'s inheritance by oppreſſion, *id* "*eſt*, taxes; but he ſhall give his ſons their "inheritance out of HIS OWN POSSESSI-"ONS; that my people be not ſcattered, "every man from his poſſeſſion." The land ſo granted is in our laws called "bock-land in the Saxon language, and *book*-land * in modern Engliſh:" that is to ſay, land granted as we find it commanded in THE book, meaning the Bible.

Having thus not merely given a *plauſible* reaſon, p. 27, as the honourable reformer his

* This boc-land is a tenure which Mr. Fearne in his Chart of Tenures, after Spelman, *unprofeſſionally*, calls *allodial*, which term is applicable only to *perſonal* property.

ſimply

ſimply requires, but ſuch a reaſon as muſt convince every impartial, true Briton, that theſe principalities and palatinates ought to be ſuffered ſtill to exiſt. And having fully anſwered every argument and queſtion relative to the ſales of theſe crown-hereditaments, I come now to enquire whether any important benefit be likely to redound to the public, by bringing ſuch a glut of crown-property all at once to market.

It is true, indeed, the honourable gentleman tells us, page 64, that the produce of the reſpective ſales is to be applied to the public ſervice—the public ſervice—Sir, they are enchanting words—there is muſic in the very ſound of them. St. Omar is inſpired with the magic, *Ignatius Loyola* is all a-blaze with their electric fire, and from the magnetic touch of his divine lips, every other patriotic breaſt is ready, inſtantly to catch the pure ethereal flame.—But alas! Sir, have theſe ſacred words never been proſtituted within theſe walls before? Are they not proſtituted in the preſent inſtance? By the words *public ſervice* does the gentleman mean, that the money ſhall be applied either in the total extinction, or even in a partial defalcation of any one tax whatever that bears hard upon the poorer claſſes of people? Will the plough-

man who ploughs your fields, or the reaper who reaps your corn, will either of them pay one ſixpenny piece the leſs, either for new ſoaling or patching of their ſhoes, which they have laborioufly and dearly earned, and which they have to this hour unmurmuringly worn out in your ſervice? the day-labourer half-ſtarved with cold, and pinched with hunger, who threſhes out your bread-corn, who tends your flocks on wilds, and wolds, uninhabited by mortal man, and who is to hedge thoſe very lands you would now incloſe, will he at even-tide, when the ſcanty half-pint of beer ſhould recruit his exhauſted bodily ſtrength and ſpirits, will he buy that beverage, the only luxury he knows, one farthing the cheaper? The poor, aged, unrepining widow, whoſe virtuous pride diſdains to aſk parochial relief, riſing up hours before the ſun, and having earned her four-pence at her wheel, going with her *farthing light*, though late to bed, ſay, thou humane beneficent reformer, will that farthing light coſt her one obole leſs? Theſe ideas never entered our reformer's head, much leſs ever reached his heart. If we turn our eyes from theſe humble, but not diſcontented ſcenes of low life, and take a curſory view of the daily diſtreſſes under which the farmer, the grazier, and the

whole

whole landed gentry of this kingdom, labour at preſent, through a deficiency of that caſh, which, inſtead of flowing directly into their hands, now takes a tedious, circuitous courſe thro' the various channels and *locks* of the navy and the army, before it reaches their doors: if on one hand, we behold the landlord ſeizing on his tenants for his rent: on the other hand, the mortgagee diſtraining on the landlord for his long-forborne intereſt: and in the midſt of this ſpacious field of reciprocal rapine and ruin, if we behold both the landlord and the mortgagee, diſpenſing with the previous, dilatory forms of law, mutually conſenting to ſell the mortgaged lands, for each other's mutual and immediate relief, and after all the trouble, humiliation, and diſgrace, uſual on ſuch occaſions, not a purchaſer in the whole kingdom is to be found; let me aſk the honourable gentleman, whether his plan of reform will either remedy or alleviate this diſtreſsful, unexaggerated ſituation of the landed intereſt of this nation? Will it augment the number of purchaſers for their eſtates? Will their eſtates ſell for one year's purchaſe more? Have not thoſe eſtates already fallen, ſome fifteen, ſome even twenty years purchaſe lower than what they coſt but ſix years ago? He knows, he knows his ſuperficial

ficial, frothy, whip-ſyllabub plan cannot poſſibly be attended with any one of theſe cheering, hope-reviving effects: he knows on the contrary, it will not only magnify, but multiply the preſent difficulties, embarraſſments, I had almoſt ſaid, deſpair of the *landed intereſt*; but what is others wretchedneſs to Edmund Burke, Eſq; . . . *he has no children of his own*—he hath no landed eſtates—at leaſt on this ſide the Iriſh ſea. Doth he then propoſe ſome other, or what other important end, to which the money ariſing from the ſales of this glut of crown-property may be better, or beneficially applied? The queſtion is ſuperfluous. Read but his pamphlet page 35, and he mildly tells us, that this money is not to be applied to any of the idle, fooliſh purpoſes above alluded-to, no, Sir,—"it ſhall come through the courſe of "circulation, and through the political ſe-"cretions of the ſtate into our better un-"derſtood and better ordered revenues."

I like not theſe ſame political ſecretions; beſides, Sir, if this be the great public ſervice we are to expect from the intended ſales, theſe ſales will neceſſarily tend to increaſe, rather than decreaſe, the influence the honourable gentleman ſo much labours to diminiſh.

miniſh. For no maxim can be plainer nor truer, than that every money-addition to the exchequer muſt give an additional weight of influence to adminiſtration. This idea might not perhaps ſtrike the honourable gentleman in the firſt ſketches of his plan, when the imagination was all on fire, p. 24, with the maſſacre of the Bards, the uproar of Preſtatyn, the ſhaking of Snowden to its baſe, and looſening Cader Edris from its foundation: during this paroxyſm of proſe run poetically mad there could be little room for ſound judgment or ſober reflection. But I underſtand that ſince the publication of his pamphlet, he ſees the maxim above-mentioned in ſo clear a point of view, and is ſo thoroughly convinced of its bottomneſs, that he publicly diſavows the plan of reform as a brat of his own proper GET, and indulging his happy talent for ridicule and pleaſantry declares he is only the god-father and putative father, for which reaſon he now in deriſion thinks proper to chriſten it "The Plan of "the Four Dukes;" but what four they may be remains a ſecret, and for their credit, we hope it never may tranſpire.

I beg pardon, Sir, for having treſpaſſed thus long on your valuable moments, in commenting

menting upon ſo puerile and unprincipled a plan of reform; but as it was uſhered firſt into this houſe, and afterwards into the world at large, under the auſpices of a name high on the waxen pinions of public fame for eloquence, wit, and ſatire, I could not reconcile to myſelf that this *lepidum caput* ſhould be hung out to public view as a *caput mortuum*, a mere *Sign* of the four-dukes-heads, which however excuſable it may be where the entertainment within is tolerably good, or at leaſt tolerably decent; yet in the preſent inſtance, where all good order is ſubverted and common decency is wanting, the licenſing ſuch a houſe, or even ſuch a *Sign*, can only tend to miſguide, miſinform, deceive, and impoſe upon an incautious, unſuſpecting public.

Having thus brought the reflections and remarks I had to make upon the honourable gentleman's bill to a concluſion, I will now collect them under one point of view. In order to give them every poſſible elucidation and perſpicuity, I divided them into three diſtinct heads: under the firſt, I ſtated what was done, and what ſtill is doing by adminiſtration, in purſuance of the county-papers now before us, and alſo what could not be done

done by adminiſtration without violating the conſtitution. I proved that the plan propoſed and actually carried into execution by government had already brought into the exchequer upwards of 400,000 l. and that other very great ſums would be ſtill daily flowing in; and that all this real and immediate advantage would accrue to the public without altering any one of the eſtabliſhed rules of office, without diſturbing any one arrangement of men or places, and without injuring, or giving cauſe of diſcontent, to any one HONEST man in the kingdom. I contraſted this plan of reform with *that* projected by the honourable gentleman, ſhewing that the advantage the public were to reap by his plan was neither immediate, nor even likely to take place within the current century; that by his own confeſſion the ſum would be but trifling, and that before one farthing could come into the exchequer, the principal departments in the royal houſehold, the mint, the artillery, the treaſuryſhip of the navy, the paymaſter-generalſhip of the army, the great offices in the principality of Wales, in the palatinates of Cheſter, Lancaſter, and in the duchy of Cornwall, muſt all either be entirely aboliſhed, or undergo certain modifications introductive of

general confuſion, and that the whole was innovation upon innovation.

Under the *ſecond* head, I proved that the influence of the crown, ſo far as it may be ſuppoſed to furniſh matter of complaint, doth not originate in the number of court-dependents now, or at any former time, in parliament; but, on the contrary, that the origin and firſt-ruling cauſe of all corrupt influence is to be found in the national debt, and in the national debt only. This incontrovertible axiom I corroborated by giving a clear impartial definition of the conſtitution itſelf, and by ſhewing that the conſtitution (which is a technical term to expreſs by one word the four treaties eſtabliſhing the fundamental, immutable, indefeaſible laws of this realm) juſtifies, authoriſes, and enjoins the crown to bring into parliament a certain, definite number of crown-tenants, a number greatly inferior to the preſent.

Under the *third* head, I proved that the honourable gentleman's plan of reform did not tend to diminiſh the influence complained of, that the moſt favourable event that this plan could produce, would be to ſhift the

influence only from one quarter to another, without the leaſt diminution of its effect; but that an infinitely greater danger might be more reaſonably expected, namely, that of driving the crown to revert to firſt principles, which would neceſſarily ſuperinduce one general unexceptional reſumption of the crown lands, and a total ſpunge of the national debt.

I likewiſe clearly demonſtrated that the glut of crown lands which the ſuperficial, unprincipled reformer, by his plan, propoſes to be ſold, would, as a mere article of finance, anſwer no one important purpoſe of the ſtate. It hath been ſuperabundantly proven, that it would not alleviate the lower claſſes of the laborious or induſtrious people of one ſingle tax. They muſt ſtill, out of their hard-earned pittance ſet a part of that very pittance for the tax on their farthing candle, the tax on their half peck of coals, and the tax on their quarter of a pound of ſoap: that the farmer, the grazier, and the whole landed gentry will find in this article of finance, no new ſupplies of money circulating in their reſpective neighbourhoods to aſſiſt them in this preſent dearth of current caſh, but on the contrary, it will accumulate diſtreſſes

upon diſtreſſes, and leave them in a much worſe ſtate, if poſſible, than they were before. Are theſe the happy, theſe the glorious effects the people are to experience from the ſales of this glut of crown-property; is this to be the produce that is is to be applied to the *public ſervice*, oh excellent reformer? *non hoc pollicitus tuis.* The bill now before us, Sir, promiſes the good people of England that the whole produce of the ſale of the lands of the duchy of Cornwall, of the duchy of Lancaſter, of the county palatine of Cheſter, and of the principality of Wales, ſhall all, all, all be applied to the public ſervice. But my countryman, to what public ſervice I pray you is it to be applied? unbluſhingly, unfeelingly, and as it were, upbraiding you with your miſeries, he his-ſelf aggravatingly tells you, it is to be applied to the political ſecretions of the ſtate,—hear him, hear him, my countrymen,—the political ſecretions of the ſtate,—there is all the public ſervice he means. Theſe ancient monuments of the landed property of our kings which have never been ſevered from the crown, which have withſtood the devouring tooth of time upwards of three thouſand five hundred years, are now to be thrown down by his ruthleſs, unpitying, ſacrilegious, hand, and are to be converted

converted for-ſooth into the common maſs of *private* property; but neither your king, yourſelves, your wives, your children, your families, or your poſterity, are to be benefited one ſingle ſhilling from all this wanton, unneceſſary proſcription, barbariſm, and devaſtation. And to inſult your underſtandings at the very inſtant he is removing all the ancient landmarks which your fathers had fixed up, he hath the graceleſs front to tell you, that "what the law reſpects ſhall be "ſacred to him: for if the barriers of law, "he ſays, ſhould be broken down, upon "ideas of convenience, even of *public* con-"venience, we ſhall have no longer any "thing certain among us." What he here advances, oh injured people, is alas too true! When the barriers of our laws, our fundamental laws I ſay, are once broken down, neither you, nor your nobles, nor our king, will any longer have the leaſt certainty, or ſhadow of aſſurance for your lives, your perſons, or your landed property. But what ſay thoſe fundamental laws their-ſelves againſt the perſon that ſhall impiouſly dare to break down theſe barriers? I ſhudder to pronounce the whole ſentence, the anathema is too tremendous and too long to be repeated at large againſt the more than parricidal violator;

violator; ſuffice it, that I tell you it concludes with the following curſe and execration, "thus may his ſoul for ever ſtink in "hell."

What more then need be ſaid; the charge, infernal as it is, hath been fully proven againſt him. The bill, Sir, now before us, without any other evidence to aſcertain his guilt, fully and clearly pronounces his conviction, and the ſentence to be paſſed on a crime of ſo black a dye is too legible in the holy ſcriptures to be miſunderſtood, or to be equivocated away, by the meaneſt capacity in the kingdom, when he hears this ſolemn condemnation: "Curſed be he that re-"moveth his neighbour's land-mark: and "all the people ſhall ſay, Amen."

For theſe reaſons, Sir, I find myſelf, as a citizen of the world at large, who pays implicit obedience to the expreſs law of God, and as a ſubject of this kingdom in particular, who pays all due ſubmiſſion and veneration to the fundamental laws of this realm, I find myſelf obliged not only to give my hearty and full negative to the bill; but however tenacious I may be of the moſt unlimited freedom of ſpeech within theſe walls, yet,

as

as a member of this houſe, Edmund Burke, Eſquire, by name and addition, inſtigated by vanity, or ſome worſe motive, hath, contrary to the uſage of parliament, and regardleſs of the duty of a good ſubject, dared to print and publiſh a pamphlet containing divers dangerous and anti-conſtitutional doctrines, ſubverſive of the ancient rights and hereditaments of the crown: a pamphlet, Sir, which hath for its title,

" The Speech
" of
" Edmund Burke, Eſquire,
" Member of Parliament for the
" City of Briſtol,
" On preſenting to the Houſe of Commons
" (On the 1ſt of February 1780)
" A Plan for the better Security of
" The Independence of Parliament,
" and the
" Oeconomical Reformation of the civil
" and other Eſtabliſhments."

I move, Sir, that as a mark and ſtigma of our entire diſapprobation, and indignation, that the ſaid pamphlet, by order of this houſe, be forthwith committed to the flames by the hands of the common hangman.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM